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# CHILD AND CHILD-NATURE

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BARONESS MARENHOLTZ-BÜLOW.





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# CHILD AND CHILD-NATURE.

Contributions to the Understanding

OF

FRÖBEL'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES,

BY

THE BARONESS MARENHOLTZ-BÜLOW.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND EDITION BY

ALICE M. CHRISTIE.



LONDON:

W. SWAN SONNENSCHN,.

15, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1879.

260 . f . 93 .

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LONDON :  
PRINTED BY WOODFALL AND KINDER,  
MILFORD LANE, STRAND, W.C.

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE book, of which the following pages are a translation, has for its object to promote a more thorough and universal understanding of the theories and philosophy on which Fröbel's educational system is based.

In their outward embodiment of Kindergarten schools, approaching more or less incompletely to the original conception of the founder of the system, these theories have been gaining for some time past increasing acceptance in England. But while Kindergartens are multiplying, and Kindergarten teachers are being trained in greater and greater numbers, and parents and children are rejoicing in the discovery that lessons and tears have no necessary connection with each other, there is still great and prevailing ignorance as to what is the real meaning of this educational revolution, or indeed as to whether there be any meaning in it at all, beyond the idea that it is better to make children's lessons pleasant rather than unpleasant, and that it is a good thing to teach them to use their hands.

It is a generally accepted fact that boys and girls must be educated, that is to say, must be taught to *do* certain things and *know* certain others in order that when they are grown up they may get on in the world and be like other people—or if possible superior to them. This process of education must of course begin at some time or other, and natural and artificial causes combined have resulted in the universal acknowledgment that it should begin as early in life as possible. Children, however, have always shown a perverse preference for play rather than lessons. Dolls, boxes of bricks, nursery-rhymes, &c., have invariably had a greater power of fascination for



their young minds than A B C's and spelling-books, or the most elegantly traced pot-hooks and copy-book maxims. Most of us can remember a time when our deepest feelings were expressed in the lines :

“ Multiplication is vexation,  
Division is as bad ;  
The Rule of Three doth puzzle me,  
And Practice drives me mad.”

And so lesson-time has been wont to be for children a time of tears and punishment and longing to have done, and, as a rule, not till the season for learning has passed do we see much desire for it.

But Fröbel has changed all this. He has not said that education should not begin so soon—on the contrary, according to him it ought to begin from the cradle—but he has said that children must not be made unhappy over their lessons, and he has given to the world a system by which he guarantees that both these ends shall be accomplished. And though some mothers are not quite sure whether their children learn what is most necessary at Kindergartens, and “get on fast enough,” and some think there is too much *system* for little children, some again that there is too much *play*, still the children are happy, and that is the chief thing.

Fröbel, however, means a great deal more than this, as will be seen by a study of the Baroness von Bulow's full and detailed exposition of his theories and philosophy. How far these are already understood in England I am not able fully to estimate, for I have had no personal experience of or connection with Kindergartens, and have not been in the way of hearing much about them ; nor, until I was asked if I would undertake the translation of this book, had I given the matter any serious attention. I certainly had very little idea myself of the way in which Fröbel had arrived at his system, or of what were the fundamental principles underlying it, and my attitude towards it was of a very uncertain nature. Whilst engaged on this translation, however, I have occasionally talked about the book to people in different ways connected with or interested in

Kindergartens, and have generally found that the essential ideas expounded in it were quite new to them—new *i.e.* in their application to the education of children.

Whether a more profound and universal comprehension of Fröbel's educational theories will at once have the effect of making Kindergartens more popular is, I think, doubtful. Those parents and teachers who have had misgivings as to the preponderance of play in this mode of education will, perhaps, be relieved to find how serious a view Fröbel took of the meaning and use of children's play; but those who have already rather inclined to find fault with the excess of systematizing, as likely to suppress all originality in children, and turn them into machines incapable of acting when the guiding hand has been removed, will possibly learn with dismay that there is even more system than they thought; and those for whom Kindergartens have as yet had no attraction, and who have been content to go on teaching and getting their children taught in old established ways, acknowledging that education is of course a very important, indeed the most important matter, and that a certain amount of method in it is undoubtedly desirable; but that even here one may go too far, and that after all those children often turn out best who are not too much looked after, &c., &c., these, doubtless, will, many of them, regard this book as a tissue of far-fetched absurdities. They may often have been perplexed by the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of knowing how far their children really understood and were benefiting by what was being taught them, and have wondered to what extent it is desirable (to some extent it is unavoidable) to store the memory with facts and ideas beyond the power of the mind to deal with and assimilate; they may often have wished that they could look into their children's minds and see clearly the processes going on there, but they will not necessarily believe Fröbel when he undertakes to lay bare these processes, and asserts that in the analogy which can be traced between the development of the individual human being and that of the race lies the clue to the insight they desire. That as mankind in its infancy had no apprehension of abstract spiritual ideas, and only took

in knowledge in a concrete form through the bodily senses without any conscious co-operation of the mind, so is it with human beings in their infancy, and that consequently children must not be troubled with abstract ideas and symbolic methods, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., until by means of their outward senses, properly trained and guided, they have obtained more or less distinct impressions of the truths which these symbols represent and treat of. Then with regard to what is most important for children to learn, since they cannot learn everything, what is the best plan to pursue, since we cannot dispense altogether with plans and systems, parents and teachers may often have felt sorely perplexed; but Fröbel's solution of the difficulty is not likely to be at once universally welcomed: on the contrary, it will probably seem to many people a very far-fetched one, to say the least. Such phrases as "the continuity and inter-connection of all things in the universe," "the unity of development in all life, organic and inorganic," "the development of humanity into an harmonious whole at unity with God," "the training of human beings in this life for a higher state of existence hereafter," are all very well in scientific books and sermons,—many people will be ready to exclaim,—“but they are rather out of place with regard to the lessons of little children. Of course we believe that this life is a preparation for another, and children must be taught to be good and religious; but we know little or nothing as to what this other life will be, and meanwhile here we are in this world, and we must get on in it as best we can and fit our children for getting on in it.”

To such Fröbel would have answered, “The universe of which our earth and its inhabitants are a part is a complete, continuous whole, and all things in it the work of the same Creator. There are no breaks in this universe, but everywhere continuity and connection. Everywhere we see lower life feeding or developing into higher life. Man is no exception to this universal law. Every child that is born into the world forms part of the scheme of the universe and is subject to its laws. His life in childhood and youth is the germ out of which the life of his manhood and old age will develop, and his life in a higher

state of existence will be the outcome of his whole life here. The end depends on the beginning. If you wish, therefore, to make a right beginning you must keep the end in view from the very first; otherwise, when you have already proceeded a considerable way, you may find that you have been moving all the time in a wrong direction, and that you have to retrace your steps and make a fresh start with time and strength wasted and diminished. What your children ought to learn, how they should be educated, is no arbitrary matter dependent on artificial passing fashion; it depends on the fundamental principles of the universe, of which human nature (and therefore child-nature too) is a part—on the eternal laws of God, which are revealed to us in the life of nature and of man. There can be no true basis of education, no right training and teaching of little children, if these laws and principles be not taken into account, any more than the tiniest plant could attain perfection if the gardener tried to rear it without regard to its dependence on the sun, saying,—‘What can such an immense globe so many millions of miles away have to do with this insignificant little primrose?’ You, who complain of my passion for system, have you ever really considered what it is that you are objecting to? Development, growth, according to a systematic plan, is not an invention of mine; it is the Divine order of the universe, and do what you will you cannot escape from it. Do you think, moreover, you would gain anything if you could? Do you imagine that you would be freer, more *original* and *individual*, if this order or *system* by which you are surrounded were suddenly changed into chaos? You say that you are afraid *systematized* training will ‘crush originality,’ ‘stamp out individuality,’ by which terms I suppose you mean that in which one human being differs from another in character and capacities. Do you find that the plants, animals, &c., which grow up under the same systematic influences of Nature become all exactly alike? In so far as my method of education is, as I meant it to be, in harmony with the system of Nature, far from stamping out individuality, it will only serve to increase it, by affording opportunity for development to all the different powers of different human beings from their earliest infancy. My object has been

to devise a plan by which children shall be surrounded from their cradles by those conditions and influences which, after long and careful study of the laws of human nature and its development, I have found to be essential for the unfolding of all the natural powers which children bring with them into the world. Many mothers will reply indignantly that they can understand their children's natures and requirements without long and careful study, and that they are the most natural and fit people to train them. They may be the most natural, but they certainly have not always shown themselves the most fit. No one can take a higher or more serious view than I do of the mother's part in the education of children, but mothers, like everything else in the world, are more or less imperfect, and the best of them will be the first to own that they cannot altogether dispense with help and guidance."

Fröbel does not claim for himself, nor is it claimed for him, that these ideas are new discoveries of his; but he has been the first to make them the basis of a system of education. However much opinion may differ as to the details of this system, however absurd even, and impracticable, much of it may appear at first, no one, I think, who professes (as most of us do) to agree with Fröbel's theories of man's part in the universe and his final destiny, can consistently refuse to acknowledge that the central principle of *Kindergartens* is a right one. And if the central principle be right, and rightly understood, the details will gradually shape themselves more and more perfectly around it, and all that is really absurd and unnecessary will in time fall away.

Fröbel's leading ideas in their intellectual and spiritual aspects cannot, I think, be better summed up than in the following words of a well-known modern preacher: \* "We spoil all this divine teaching of God and Nature by forcing the child out of his unconsciousness into self-consciousness, by demanding of him reflection, by checking the joy of his receptiveness by too much teaching, too much forcing. Let him remain for a time ignorant of himself, and abide in his Heavenly Father's hands; let him live naturally, and drink in his *wisdom* and his

\* See Stopford Brooke's Sermon, "Child Life," in the volume entitled "Christ in Modern Life," p. 287.

*religion* from the influences which God makes play around him. Above all do not demand of him, as many do, convictions of sin, nor make him false and hysterical by calling out from his imitative nature deep spiritual experiences which he cannot truly feel. Let him begin with natural religion ; leave him his early joy untainted ; see that he knows God as love, and beauty, and sympathy. It is horrible to anticipate for him the days, soon enough to come, when sorrow and sin will make of life a battle, where victory can only be bought by pain."

But there is a third aspect of the Kindergarten system, which, though I dwell on it last, is the one to which Fröbel gives the greatest prominence : it is the physical development of children. True to his central idea of the continuity of the universe and of all its different parts, he cannot separate the human body from the mind and soul of which it is the outward expression. The three are closely bound up together, and must be treated accordingly. But in the beginning of life the intellectual and spiritual natures exist only in the germ, and the physical nature with its instincts and necessities plays the prominent part. If, then, education is to act as a guide to natural development, and not as a hindrance, it must take this fact into account, and during the first years of life devote itself chiefly to calling out and cultivating the limbs and senses which are intended as organs of the mind and spirit, so that when the latter begin to act they may have fit instruments to work with.

This is the principle underlying all the "play" which enters into the Kindergarten system, and which is so planned that, while it develops all the different parts of the body in a healthy and pleasurable manner, it serves also by various means, such as rhythmical movement, dramatic representation, accompanying song and narrative, to awaken the higher senses and faculties. The body, while receiving from the first its due share of attention, is also from the first kept in subjection to the spirit.

As by the translation of this book I consider that I have associated myself with the Kindergarten movement, I wish to say in conclusion how thoroughly I have become convinced of the essential merits of the system, and how much I hope that the

introduction of this little work into England may contribute to the spread of Kindergarten schools and teaching among us.

For the English version of some of the songs which occur in the latter part of the book, I am indebted to Miss Amelia Gurney, who kindly placed at my disposal an unpublished translation of Fröbel's "Mutter und Koselieder." Her initials are affixed to those songs and mottoes of which I have adopted her translations.

With most of his games and songs Fröbel connects a motto which explains their spirit and intention; the following lines of Mr. Browning's seem to me to form a perfect motto to the whole system :

Let us not always say,  
"Spite of this flesh to-day  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!  
As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul."

Therefore I summon age  
To grant's youth's heritage,  
Life's struggle having so far reached its term :  
Thence shall I pass, approved  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute ; a god though in the germ.

Kew, February, 1879.

## AUTHORESS' PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.



PART of the following Essays have already appeared in the journal entitled "Erziehung der Gegenwart" (Berlin, Enslin, 1861, 1862), prepared by me, and edited by Karl Schmidt, Councillor of Education, which work being now out of print, a republication of the Essays may be acceptable. The remaining part has been added quite lately.

D. B.

BERLIN, *May*, 1868.



## AUTHORESS' PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE present edition appears unaltered, and will, we hope, meet with the same reception as did the first, especially in the circle of Kindergarten teachers.

Although, since the first appearance of this work, the spread of Kindertartens may have made important progress, the same cannot be said of the understanding of Fröbel's principles.

These, on the contrary, have become more and more perverted by the continually increasing number of incompetent persons who have attempted to carry them out, and need on this account renewed interpretation. It is to this end that the second edition of this work will be devoted.

D. B.

DRESDEN, *May*, 1878.

## A

# NEW METHOD OF EDUCATION.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

THE process of transformation through which human society is passing at the present day necessitates unquestionably a reconstruction of our educational system.

The life of individuals, like that of the whole of humanity, is not a chance following one upon another of "yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow," a blind game at dice, which apportions to each generation its lot without care or forethought; it is, on the contrary, a connected whole, and just as much governed and developed according to eternal laws as is the microscopic world contained in a drop of water, or the countless solar systems of the cosmic universe, or the distant nebulae which the telescope renders visible to us.

Human society is an organism, the separate parts of which cannot be worked upon in an isolated manner. Whatever affects one member of this society affects all the other members, and consequently the organism as a whole. Great political revolutions, state changes, the discovery of fresh truths, of deeper knowledge, not only alter the face of a particular limited area of society, but bring about changes, or, we would rather say, improvements, progress, greater or less, in all departments of

B

human life. And, if there is one department of which this may be said more emphatically than of any other, it is that of Education.

Education is concerned with the preparation for life in a human society of which the conditions are in a perpetual state of change and modification. Her office is to prepare each individual for future activity in this society, and she is to a certain extent answerable for the blessing or the curse which respectively follows on a rational or an irrational training for life. Hence it is not enough that she should have mastered the circumstances and conditions of life by which her pupils are surrounded in the present; she must also be able to look forward with prophetic grasp to the altered conditions in which their manhood or womanhood will be spent. And therefore educational systems must never be satisfied to keep to old-fashioned grooves which do not accord with the new conditions of the times, but must be always ready to adapt themselves to the ever-changing aspect of things.

The immense changes in the conditions of life and labour which the revolutionary process of our age has already brought about, and will still more bring about in the future, can escape the notice of none who are capable of observing human affairs, from whatever point of view they may contemplate them. The opening out of political and civil rights to all classes, with the more universal desire for a share in the working of state machinery consequent thereon, necessitates undeniably an extension of the training necessary to fit men for such work. And a like demand is made on all departments of life—art, science, and religion not excepted. Everywhere there is a widening of boundaries, an increase of the conditions which call for co-operation; everywhere we see not only that greater and more difficult tasks are allotted to individuals, but that the number of such tasks has multiplied, and that they require ever greater and wider combinations of labourers for their fulfilment.

The above remarks apply, of course, with more or less fitness to all times, for the development of mankind—of individual nations as of individual men—is a process which has gone on

uninterruptedly through all ages; but at the same time, the history of this development proves indisputably the periodical recurrence of epochs in which the changes, which for centuries beforehand had been gradually and silently preparing, have at last ripened into fruit, when the new has burst forth from the husk of the old in visible form, and with distinctly urged claims.

Such an epoch is ours.

The conception, scarce fifty years old, of universal education for the people has, for instance, become something quite different from what it originally was. The demand for a higher grade of culture in all classes of society makes itself every day more distinctly heard. And public education, in the shape of schools, has certainly in the main, and on the whole, striven to respond to this demand. But has all been accomplished that should be? Without in the least wishing to underrate the manifold improvements which have taken place in the number and condition of schools, we feel nevertheless justified in asking whether these are even yet adequate to satisfy the demands of the present day with regard to universal human culture? Whether such knowledge of, and insight into, the true, the good, the noble, the beautiful, the ideal, as schools of the present highest standard of excellence are able to afford, be enough to satisfy the need for purer morality, to impart power to carry out that which the soul acknowledges as best.

Appearances and facts, both, alas! compel us to answer this question in the negative! Look at our over-filled prisons; our countless hospitals and reformatories; the ever-increasing number of divorces, or still worse, the profanation of marriage itself, which has come to be so generally looked upon as a caricature; the growing frequency of suicide; the gigantic strides of pauperism, spite of the emancipation of labour and trade from all restrictions and obstacles; spite of the strong impetus given to the most important branches of industry; consider the rapid spread of the irreligious spirit, with its contempt for all the loftier emotions of the human soul; the triumphs of dead rationalism and materialism, of mere ignoble pleasure-seeking; see what a following is everywhere gained by soulless superfi-

ciality, wordy charlatanry, and unblushing deception—and say whether all this bears witness to, whether these all are the fruits of, a sound and true system of education, a system corresponding to the degree of civilization attained in the present day.

And, so far I have touched only on the outward aspect of existing circumstances; I have said nothing of the misery which meets the eye when it penetrates to the hidden regions of society. Self-seeking in its coarsest as well as its most refined forms, vulgarity of every description, greed, avarice, the most miserable frivolity, lies, and trickery of every conceivable kind. Such are the vices found to be working in secret, while outwardly they appear in the garb of their opposite virtues. Outward appearance is the god we worship, and outward appearance has to such an extent gained the mastery in the world, that belief in pure disinterested desire after good has almost vanished, genuine self-sacrifice is mistrusted, mocked at, or calumniated, and the man who yearns after a better state of things is condemned to the martyrdom of battling with sordid petty souls.

The objection, that “so it is, and so it always will be, as long as there are human beings and human passions,” is one which nobody can or dares make who thoughtfully surveys the course of human development; for such a survey must incontrovertibly show the great difference between the condition of civilized nations and that of wild barbaric hordes—must show how high modern civilization stands above the rude naturalism of our forefathers. The really great spirits of all ages, and of all nations, agree in the assertion that the human race is destined to attain to an ever higher degree of perfection, and consequently of happiness and well-being.

But the accomplishment of this destiny depends on the harmonious cultivation of all the natural powers and talents, and requires that, at every fresh stage of development in the acquirement of knowledge, there should be a corresponding stage of development in the capacity for moral action. This balance, between the knowledge of what is good and the power to put that knowledge into action, is more disturbed in the present

day than it ever was before, and to restore it as far as possible is the chief, if not the sole, duty of education.

But schools alone are not adequate to the fulfilment of this duty ; and for this reason, that they concern themselves almost solely with the training of the understanding—their chief business is to impart knowledge ; and knowledge and understanding alone are not sufficient to put a stop to vice, crime, and immorality, or even to keep them within bounds. However much these evils may be the result of ignorance of anything better, the chief blame must be laid to the imperfect cultivation of the heart and conscience and moral will ; and this work is best carried on outside the school, in the home and the family, and by means of various other influences.

The history of all ages teaches us that a one-sided, purely intellectual development, far from preserving men from moral wrong-doing, rather tends to lead them into it, by supplying them with increased power. The assertion that crime has decreased during the last century may have some foundation in fact, but to deduce therefrom an increase of morality would be false and illusory. If the number of gross flagrant misdeeds has lessened, the sum of iniquity wrought out in secret has certainly not diminished, and abhorrence of all that is low, shame at infamy and disgrace, are undoubtedly weaker feelings than formerly. Mankind of to-day wears the blossom of intelligence on its crown, while its roots are rotting in the mire of materialism. The enlightened mind strives upwards to the heights of culture, while the feet are entangled and chained down by the fetters of vice and degradation. In the midst of the gross-minded only outwardly civilized *many*, we see the *few* struggling in vain after a better state of things, after the realization of conditions under which, in a higher and a nobler sense, they may find happiness, or, at any rate, satisfaction. And this gulf between knowing and doing, between striving and attaining, between the ideal and the real, becomes wider every day, because there is a daily increase in the sum of knowledge, while the power of action is too often frittered away in fruitless efforts. Let no one complain that I have painted too black a picture. Whenever reform is in question, it is an imperative

duty to show up unsparingly the dark side of things, to lay bare the whole evil and its consequences. This does not hinder the recognition of the corresponding bright side, of the good which exists side by side with the evil. The Spirit of God works in all ages, and His sun shines over all.

It is the faulty method of education in vogue in these, whether mentally or physically, most unhealthy times, that strikes us at the outset as the chief cause of the evils enumerated. The present generation is, perhaps, the least happy that the world has seen for many centuries. Precocity of understanding, pride of intellectual criticism, reason gaining strength at the expense of feeling, morbid craving for premature enjoyment, weariness of life, &c., are certainly not tokens of a fresh, joyous, hopeful youth, capable of bringing about a better, worthier, loftier condition of morality.

To produce a higher order of things, we want a higher order of human beings, and these again can only be produced by a system of education corresponding to the degree of civilization at present reached. If we want plants that shall produce better fruit, we have to expend more care and culture on the seeds.

Schools have undoubtedly a large share in the fulfilment of this task, but still only a share; for education—or preparation for life—comprehends more and wider elements than can be dealt with in the narrow limits of school systems. Just as human life absorbs into itself for its own use all branches of knowledge, so should the training of the school seek to comprise within its scope every branch of life, and thus preserve for its pupils a constant harmony between life and knowledge, theory and practice, thinking and doing. Schools should no longer be merely places of book-learning, no longer be satisfied to teach the sciences without any regard to their application to life. Their aim should be, as far as possible, to effect a fusion between knowledge and practice. Before all things they should furnish their scholars with opportunities for the exercise of their moral powers; and the first requisite to this end is scope for free action—for it is only the free choice of good which stamps our actions as moral in the higher sense of the word. A really moral

education cannot be effected by simply placing before the pupil examples of elevation of mind, or heroic deeds, such as history affords: a field for action, and for the exercise of the will, is also needed. No less also is the need of opportunities for the formation of good habits, which are the foundation of all virtue. A soldier may have learnt every handbook of military science by heart, but he will not be able to carry out a stratagem without practice.

Education must supply something more than mere word-teaching.

Labour and pray! the Bible beautifully says to us; that is, feed thy spirit by communion with the highest, and shine forth before the world in deeds. Word-teaching is undoubtedly quicker and easier both for master and pupils, but for this very reason it is most pernicious to the latter, for they accustom themselves to receiving ideas without effort, thought, or inquiry. A sound, natural process of education is something quite different. The mind in its infancy is only able to take in a small amount of *imparted* knowledge at a time, and can only assimilate it slowly and gradually. At first it only takes to itself facts presented to it in a tangible form—that is to say, the *concrete*, which is all, that in its first period of development, it can really grasp. But, even in the contemplation of the concrete, it depends upon the will, or the peculiar disposition of the pupil, whether he will carry away a clear and lasting idea of what he has seen, or only quickly-fading impressions.

It is also a necessity of the infant mind to give out again in concrete form the ideas and images which it has taken into itself, and thus to fix in clear objective shape the dim undefined images floating in its little brain. This strongly manifested need of child-nature is injuriously checked and counteracted by premature verbal instruction, and overmuch imparting of information, and the mental powers are thereby weakened.

The next point of importance, in providing for the greatest happiness and well-being of humanity, is to find out early in the life of each individual the special *call* that nature has made to him through special organization and talents, and to maintain his outward existence in harmony with this inward predis-



position. The harmony in the world of nature arises from the fact that everything is exactly in accordance with the laws of its particular being, and exactly in the place where nature intended it to be, and that nothing wishes to be something else, or somewhere else. A like harmony will only reign in the world of man when that takes place consciously, which happens unconsciously in nature. And the only way to such an end is to recognize the inner calling early in the childhood of individuals, and to determine the line of education accordingly, so that they may be made completely capable of fulfilling their vocations.

Man is destined to find contentment. But he can find it in no other way than by working out his life, and perfecting his inner self through the fulfilment of duty, and in the labour of his vocation. If the road to this end were entered on at the beginning of life, if education led in this direction and built up the requisite capacity, thousands might be saved from the paths of error who are only led astray by the natural desire for inward and outward happiness. The only possible way of counteracting the passions, which are for ever enticing into crooked paths, is by giving the higher promptings of human nature the opportunity of assisting themselves, and so developing them that they may be strong enough to take the lead in all circumstances. The happiness which comes to us through the attainment of high moral force, and the fulfilment of our vocation and duty—whereby the ideal elements of personal life are called into play—will be a sure guarantee against the search after lower and less noble kinds of happiness. Harmony between our inward and outward nature will have been realized as far as possible, and we shall have strength to overcome the unavoidable discords of the outer world.

Every thoughtful human being requires a central point round which his actions, efforts, and wishes may revolve; he requires it for his inner as well as his outer life. The want of such a centre produces discord in his nature, and makes him unhappy. The higher this central point is fixed, the easier will it be to determine the relations between the personal existence of the individual and the common life of mankind; and it is these

very relations between the individual and mankind which are in question, when a higher morality, a more real and worthy satisfaction, are talked of. For man is not only an individual, he is also a member of an endless chain of human beings, he is inseparably bound up with the whole body of humanity—of that part of it which is contemporary with him, that which went before, and that which will follow after.

At the present day there exists only the semblance of such an expansion of the individual into the universal life—and semblance can never afford genuine happiness—truth and reality can alone do this. Unreality is the sure vantage-ground of dissatisfaction; and if this stronghold is to be vanquished, if an increase of real happiness is to be made possible, education must furnish the necessary forces—and that from the outset of life. And there is no other way than by satisfying the demands of the senses in the ideal sense.

To promote this end there must be placed before the child, first the *agreeable*, in the shape of physical sensations; then the *beautiful*, which must come to it as impressions on the senses from outside; and thirdly, the *good*, viz., the satisfaction of its inner conscience. There will also be further need of the formation of good habits and of personal activity, which will begin with childish play to end in moral well-doing.

And all this must be accomplished by means of the two factors of education—the family and the school.

Neither of these is as yet equal to its task. The training in the family is left very much to chance, is dependent on the greater or less natural capacity of the parents, the best of whom have no sure guide of action, while the greater number proceed without any thought whatever. The school, on the other hand, affords little opportunity for anything besides intellectual culture, and it is only through this means *indirectly*—instead of, as should be, *directly*—that it can work on the moral powers. There is no field in the school for free action, for the creation of the beautiful, and for the full exercise of the active powers; and without these means neither moral forces nor any other endowments can be strengthened and perfected.

In order that these necessary conditions may be realized,

there is need of a deeper knowledge of child-nature as it exists in its original state, with its dispositions as yet unbiassed, and also of new methods whereby these dispositions—of which the form and direction exist in the infant stage only in embryo—may be from the beginning directed towards the good, the true, and the beautiful. And however impossible it may be to accomplish all this absolutely and perfectly, it must, nevertheless, be the aim which education strives after, the ideal which it sets before itself under all circumstances.

To whatever extent earlier educationalists may have expressed similar thoughts, and striven to work them out, existing circumstances prove that the services rendered by them alone were not sufficient. A fresh genius was needed to add new material to the old.

And such a genius we behold in Friedrich Fröbel, the first and the only teacher who has discovered a practical method of maintaining due harmony—from the very beginning of a child's life, and with exact regard to the special materials to be dealt with in each case—between the receiving and the giving out of knowledge, between learning and practising, between knowing and doing. By his work the first step has been made in the solution of the highest educational problem, and a process of education in true correspondence with the laws of nature has been rendered possible. According to Fröbel's principles, body and spirit both receive due attention; neither is suppressed or neglected for the sake of the other, but the body through the discipline of the senses and impulses is raised to the level of the spirit. And, even if the highest union between the two does not yet seem within the range of possibility, there has been at any rate a material lessening of the discord in human nature—the discord which made of the body and the spirit two inimical forces, fighting against instead of beside each other.

This is the point which has been so much misapprehended in the study of Fröbel's system. And yet Fröbel does not deny the existence in the newborn infant of an original disposition towards evil. But, like all rational persons, he considers it the first duty of education to give to human dispositions a bias in

the direction of good, in order that the original discord may be brought continually nearer to harmony.

Who is there that would presume to decide how far the attainment of such an end is possible through education—how far it is possible at all? But, if this were not the end aimed at, there would be no basis for, no reason in, education. Let it not, however, be supposed that we wish to do away with, or even to impugn, the belief in the final solution of this problem, for we are not concerned with perfection in its absolute sense when we treat of education on this earth only.

But a new sort of beginning must be made if the desired end is to be reached through gradual development.

And this new beginning must begin with the life of the child, and, consequently, in the home, and by means of the most important educational factor—the mother.

The mother must no longer be content to meet her child's impulses with the maternal impulse—for impulse is blind, and the following of it cannot result in happiness for reasonable beings. But, in the present stage of the development of the understanding, she needs these childish impulses, and the end for which they are destined, in order that she may be able to afford them the right kind of satisfaction.

It is to the perfection of this science, the true science for mothers, that Fröbel has opened up the way. Through it the family will be rendered capable of fulfilling its educational task more completely, and will thus take equal rank with the school, inasmuch as in the circle of the family the soil will be prepared for the intellectual training of the school, and the development of the moral powers, to which the school is not adequate, will be carried out.

## CHAPTER II.

## CHILD-NATURE.

THE child is born into the world! He enters it struggling; a scream is his first utterance. His destiny is labour; he has to make himself master of the world by his own exertions in whatever sphere of society his cradle may lie.

A thick veil hangs over the young being which, like a closely enveloped bud, does not betray the exact image of the flower it will one day expand into.

Can even the mother divine what fate is in store for her new-born child? She knows not whether there lies in her lap a future benefactor of mankind, or a miserable criminal. Is it in her power to bring about the one destiny—to avert the other? Who can doubt that she may do something towards both these ends? Imagine, for instance, an infant with the natural endowments of a Goethe, a Beethoven, a Raphael, or a Franklin, and let its cradle be placed in some haunt of misery and vice. A childhood without loving care, without guidance, passed in the midst of immoral surroundings; a youth lived among drunkards, thieves, and liars—how much of the original material will have been developed?—as good as none! and the gifts of nature will probably become a perilous weapon in the hands of a scoundrel.

Or suppose the same gifted child to be born in a palace, and brought up by weak, light-minded parents in extravagance and luxury, and under the pernicious system of intellectual forcing, but at the same time, in all practical senses, in utter idleness—is it likely that in such a case, the natural endowments will ripen to perfection? Hardly! If a few sickly sprays shoot out and blossom, it is as much as can be hoped for.

Now let us reverse the supposition, and imagine a child of quite ordinary faculties reared neither in want and vice, nor in luxury and superfluity, whose parents and whole surroundings fulfil all the conditions which a human being can require for its development—will a distinguished man or woman be the result in such a case—a great artist, or a splendid character, whose place will be lastingly marked out in human society? Certainly not! Great geniuses, great characters, bring their greatness with them into the world. Rose-trees cannot be grown from thistle-seeds.

Or let us imagine the most highly gifted of human beings brought up under all the best conceivable educational influences, whether according to Fröbel's principles or others—would such an one appear before us as a completely perfect man? Certainly not! If we presumed to answer this question in the affirmative, we must be prepared to maintain as a general fact that human conditions are sufficient, in any direction whatever, to produce perfection. And this we cannot do. For we see all around us defects of birth, as well as defects of education and surroundings, and we cannot attempt to determine how much of the imperfection of human beings is to be attributed to natural qualification, and how much to outward influences—to the education which is bestowed, as well as to that which goes on of itself.

Each of these influences has its part in the development of the man or woman out of the child. But the more human knowledge embraces in its scope the knowledge of human nature, the more educational systems are adopted to this knowledge, the nearer will they be brought to perfection.

Human nature has not as yet attained to its full standard of development, nor does any one yet know to what height it is capable of rising even on earth. Once only did mankind behold its perfect pattern in the man Christ Jesus. But we know that man is of divine origin, and that his destiny is to become the image of God. Eternally progressing development can alone solve the problem of his existence.

Fröbel aptly describes human nature when he says: "Man is at once the child of nature, the child of humanity, and the

child of God ;" in this threefold sense alone can he be rightly understood. Fröbel himself has done little to develop this and many other of his profound thoughts on human nature, and there is, therefore, need of constant exposition to make them more thoroughly understood. By the comprehension of this threefold character in human nature, Fröbel to a certain extent neutralizes the discord between body and spirit, for he places man as a reconciler between God and Nature.

With its first breath the child comes undoubtedly into relation with these three powers: Nature, Humanity, and God.

(1.) As a child of nature, man is connected with all the elements of creation, even down to the inorganic ones, which can be detected as iron in the blood, as chalk in the bones, and so forth. As a product of nature, he is not only subject to her laws, he lives in her, and only exists through her, he comes out from her and goes back to her ! He is surrounded by her atmosphere, and his earthly life is an outcome of it. Soil and climate, food and clothing, with the modes of life arising therefrom, give their special stamp to races and peoples, of which the individual man is a member. There is not a single product of nature that does not pass into man, or at any rate stand in relation to him. Everywhere there goes on a perpetual interchange of material between man and nature, nature and man ; and when a human being has finished his course on earth, he bequeaths to the earth his body which will rise from it again as plants, flowers, or fruits.

And through nature, too, men are closely bound up in one another, each generation in itself, and all generations together, for, from the first down to the last, the great world chemist has smelted and fused them with one another, and with the kingdoms of nature.

In all these kingdoms there is but one and the same law which governs alike the heavenly bodies and the smallest stone, the lowest animal, and the noblest human being, for all have the same origin and the same Creator, God. And it is because the Spirit of God lives in nature and in the human soul that man is able to understand nature. Only where there is mutual

analogy, is mutual understanding possible. And this understanding, this finding out, of analogies must be arrived at, if man is to acquire a deeper knowledge of his own being. We have not yet got beyond the A B C of the great symbolisms of nature : but science now-a-days takes possession with giant strides of one realm of nature after another. Let us only place the rising generation, from its cradle up, under the mighty influences of divine nature, so that her intuitive language may penetrate to our children's souls, and awaken an echo in them, and mankind will soon be better able to solve the riddles which contain the key of life, the hieroglyphs of this mystic symbolism will soon be legible to all.

(2.) But as a child of humanity, the young citizen of the world comes out from the circle of *necessity* to which all the domains of nature belong, and enters the realm of freedom, of self-knowledge, and self-mastery.

The stamp of natural organisms is simple, and easily recognized ; the species is a sure index to the individual.

In the human organism, *individuality* grows into *personality*, which once established can never more be lost, but expands and develops continually in the chain of conscious existence, whose highest member leads up to the Godhead. But here, too, the species, the tribe, the nation, the generation, all combine to give the stamp to the individual.

Who is there that would be able to unravel the many-threaded, thousand-fold entangled web of derivation ? To determine how much is inherited from the race, the nation, the family, and how much is peculiar to the individual himself. Do not numberless traits of character live on from forefathers to descendants ? No one can entirely separate himself from the chain of which he is a link. None can repudiate the heritage of his fathers ; whether it descend to him in the features of his face, in his gestures, or in special qualities of the soul, either good or bad.

The old saying, "the sins of the fathers are visited on the children to the fourth generation," is true for all times. But virtues perpetuate themselves in like manner, and it is within the free choice of every separate personality to diminish the



sum of wickedness and to increase that of virtue. The moral progress of mankind depends on this, that each individual and each generation make such use of the pound handed over to it by its predecessor, that it shall bring back thousand-fold interest.

Backslidings of individual human beings, as of individual nations, are unavoidable in the great school of experience in which Providence has placed mankind. But progress in the main, and on the whole, is going forward. To deny this, is as much as to deny the Providence which has implanted this incessant yearning after something better (even under earthly conditions) in the human breast, and has based on this yearning the whole moral and mental development of man. Without the assumption of the possibility of perfection, for the individual as well as for the race, human education would be without end or aim.

To what extent man is the offspring of humanity is seen in a thousand different ways. A child may have been transplanted to a foreign land and into the midst of foreign surroundings immediately after its birth, and it will nevertheless learn its mother tongue with greater facility than any other. There are examples to show that children who had lost their parents in strange countries, at the tenderest age, and had never heard a syllable of their mother tongue, learnt it with incredible rapidity at the first opportunity. So, too, it is affirmed that it is not only owing to the imitative faculty that children learn their parents' trades so easily. The practice of the parents, through which special organs are developed, stands the children in good stead. And who has not caught himself in habits which are hereditary in his family?

Humanity is a *whole*, and is destined to develop and establish itself more and more as an organism through the conscious hanging together of its members, through the realization (striven after by all religions) of the brotherhood of men. Hence the individual can only be understood when considered as part of the race, while it is only through individuals that the race can receive the full impress of all its manifold features. The paradox, "the more individual, so much the more

universal; and the more universal, so much the more individual," is only an apparent contradiction. The more distinctly and completely the personal character of the individual pronounces itself, the nearer will it approach the universal character of mankind. Harmony in music is all the more perfect when each separate instrument gives out its particular note clearly and sharply.

Profound obscurity still covers the *Why* of the great mystery of unity in variety, and of the linking together of generations in the past, the present, and the future. But with the advance of all other sciences that of humanity is advancing also. The time will come when man shall have arrived at that, which by the wise of all ages has been recognized as the keystone of wisdom, viz., "to know oneself."

All knowledge must ascend from the easier to the more difficult; and so the road to the knowledge of man must lead first through that of the organisms of nature, which is subordinate to man. Man must first behold himself in the looking-glass of nature, before he can rightly use that glass which the history of mankind holds up to him.

Only in the mirror of his own race, in the history of humanity, can individual man see what his true nature is—though hitherto it may be only in a fragmentary manner. However much epochs and nations may differ from one another, and however infinite in its variety may be the conformation of separate individuals—each one sees, nevertheless, the universal features of his broad human nature beaming at him from the portraits of history. What is it that makes the dramas of Shakspeare immortal, but the grandly universal traits of human nature which stand out with the strongest individuality in all his characters? These universal features remain the same, and are comprehensible, in all ages and under all forms.

Mankind from its birth, like individual man, has passed through, and is still passing through, the different stages of childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. And conversely we see in the development of the individual the universal features of the progress of mankind.

Fröbel has studied these features with deeper insight, and

has found a method of drawing them out in the various stages of childish development, through sensation, will, and action.

In the instinctive utterances of infant nature, in so far as its freedom is not curtailed by the training universally in vogue, are seen traces of the groove in which mankind has gone forward in its march from the beginnings of civilization to the heights reached at the present day. The instinct of animals has been strong enough from the very beginning to procure them the necessities of their existence. The various races of animals have not changed their functions within our epochs. The bee builds its cell, the swallow her nest, the fox his hole, exactly as they did formerly. Man alone has been compelled to open out a way for himself, to mount upwards by his own labour and exertions, by the mighty power of his inventive spirit, and through thousands of errors and byways, from the first rude conditions of a wild life of nature to the heights of civilization. The history of human culture shows what man is, and what he is capable of, what has been reached, and what is still wanting.

But whatsoever the mind of man may have produced, from the most primitive work-tools carved out of stones and roots, to the wonderful machinery of modern times; from the first rude outlines, copied from the shadows of objects, to the wonders of sculpture and painting; from the imitated tones of birds and insects and all the different sounds of nature, to the symphonies of Beethoven; from the rude knowledge of the relations of space and size to the measurement of the heavens; in all that the human mind has accomplished in the way of knowledge, it is nature that has given the direction-line and the law. For man could only create after the patterns of the Creator himself, and it is only in a later stage of development that the genius of mankind has been capable of giving a divine stamp to these first rude constructions, and of elevating them into works of art. These early patterns were to man at the same time symbols of truth; visible signs of the invisible—until he became capable of immediate apprehension through the Word. By gentle, gradual steps, through the rudest and the simplest modes of sensual perception to the manifestation

of divine beauty in Art, and of divine truth in the Word, has God, the great educator, led his human children.

In the play of children of all times we see the nature of mankind expressed. Its past and future life passes through the soul of the child as a dim recollection and a dim foreboding, and groping and fumbling it seeks to find the leading-string, both outward and inward, which shall guide it through all labyrinths to the fulfilment of its tasks.

As birds build their nests, so children in their play build houses, or dig holes. As chickens scratch up the earth, so, too, do little children's hands, until in their little gardens they have learnt in play how to till the soil, and sow and reap. Any chance-found material will serve them for plastic modelling, be it only moist sand. There is no art which is not attempted by children, whether it be pictures in chalk or pencil, or drawn in the sand; or that the first stammering tones of the newborn infant move rhythmically; or the crowing of the cock, the mooing of the cow, the bark of the dog, and any other animal voices, be imitated by children, until true musical sounds issue from their little throats; these are the first beginnings which lead up to art. And with the rudiments of industry and art, the first germs of science show themselves also in the desire to know. With its oft-repeated: why, how, wherefore? the young mind strives to get to the bottom of things, to the fundamental truth, to their source in God.

It is a fundamental necessity that the development of the individual should go through the same phases as that of the race, for both have the same end before them. Happiness—or according to Fröbel—"Joy, Peace, Freedom," are sought by the individual, are sought by mankind. To both these can only come through the fulfilment of their destination, which is the full development of the entire human nature. A rightly directed education is the chief means of reaching this end, but a means which is only possible through a right understanding of man and nature. Through this understanding alone can the secret of human existence be discovered.

(3.) Every human being is in his spiritual origin a particular *thought of God*.

The *child of God* exists only as a feeble spark in the human being at his first entrance into the world; to fan this spark into a flame is the object of his earthly existence. At the beginning of existence the *child of nature* rules in man as instinctive life, as an impulse which awakens the will—at first only as an un-governed force of nature. Self-preservation is almost exclusively the unconscious object of all childish utterances. And we have no right to blame children for this so-called egoism; had not an all-wise providence implanted this impulse so strongly in the human breast, how could weak, helpless beings preserve their existence in the midst of the countless perils of life? It is, however, the business of education to moderate this instinct of self-preservation, and by the exercise of the capacity for loving, to lead the child out of the narrow range of personal life into that of the *child of humanity*, i.e., the social being who constitutes a member of human society. In this sphere feeling and reason bear rule, and by these the will is guided, and pointed to a higher aim than mere personal well-being.

Self-reliance, independence, freedom, are the highest stamps of the *child of humanity* as an individual. How far would the development of the world have advanced were it not for the inborn, unextinguishable craving which is driving and spurring men on to create for themselves an independent existence, a respected position in society? Almost all progress is the result of it. Each one wishes to assert himself, to be himself the centre of a little world of his own activity; and this desire drives him to a thousand exertions, to countless inventions, to continuous alteration of his position, and consequently of his whole circumstances.

So long, however, as man considers only himself—or even the wider self of his family—so long the *child of God* still slumbers in him. Then only is the latter awake and living, when the love which has hitherto embraced only himself, and the narrow circle of those living with him, drives him forth into the larger community of the nation and the race; when this love becomes strong enough to move him, regardless of his own personality, yea, more, at the sacrifice of earthly person-

ality, to devote himself to the good of the whole. He that enters the service of mankind has entered the service of God. The saying: "He that loveth not his brethren, how can he love God?" is the kernel of all religion. Through the love of those outside us we arrive at the love of God, in that higher community which exists outside the visible world.

By every ideal upsoaring we overstep the limits of this earthly visible life, and penetrate into a higher world where the mortal becomes immortal. If everywhere throughout the universe there is continuous unbroken connection, it can only be an apparent gap which is caused by earthly death. The image of God, to which man is called to raise himself, cannot be perfected in the narrow limits of earthly existence; in his divine nature man is a citizen of the great All, which prevails by gradual advances, thereby conquering time and space.

Who is there that either would or could deny that man bears in himself the marks that he is destined to communion with God, and, finally, to union with Him? Has there ever been a human being worthy of the name, who has passed through the whole course of his earthly life without experiencing a craving after something higher? It may have been but one single moment of strong emotion, whether of joy or of sorrow, but that moment has been enough to point to something beyond the confines of this existence. Is there any work of man, even the highest, any deed, even the greatest, which does not presuppose something higher than itself, more perfect? Nowhere in human existence is full satisfaction to be found, everywhere forebodings, yearnings, hopings, drive us outside of ourselves—on to the Ideal of Humanity—as it was once presented to us in Him who gave His life for His brethren—on to the fountain of all fulness and perfection—to God Himself!

Such is the *child of God* who enters into a higher liberty, because he has become capable of a higher love. Only through love is true liberty possible; for it is only love that can conquer whatever is opposed to liberty; and only in liberty is love possible, for only he who possesses himself in perfect liberty is free to give himself up in love.

All great benefactors of mankind, all its true heroes, martyrs,

and saints, all really great artists and great discoverers of truth and science—as also all childlike souls who have lived out their lives in simplicity and piety—were children of God. In them the divine spark had kindled into a holy fire of inspiration, purifying and enlightening the soul, and enabling the divine mind to shine through the human. In them the soul had burst the narrow bounds of personality and expanded itself on mankind, in anticipation of that time when all human beings, in full possession of their perfected individuality, will together realize the great being of humanity; *i.e.*, when all the endless variety of human life shall be swallowed up in unity, and the countless different notes of a great harmony of brotherly love be struck in concord. Then the child of God will have triumphed in humanity, then good will have conquered evil, then the Apotheosis of this earthly globe and its inhabitants will be consummated!

We may lower or raise the standard of perfection attainable on earth as much as we will—it matters little. Once let us accept the law of progress as an eternal law, and it must lead us on to ever higher ends. There are only two alternatives: either this earth is a treadmill, on which men go round and round without ever getting further; or else mankind is destined to attain even on earth to a God-decreed height of perfection, which will be carried on further and further in the great hierarchy of the universe.

If all without exception believed in this high destiny, if each one of us was convinced that he was called to work according to God's will towards the fulfilment of this aim, how much more quickly would it be reached? How much more easily would want and sorrow be endured if we kept steadily in view the great end, to bring us nearer which every experience of humanity must be gone through, every pain suffered and its cause mastered? But each patient sufferer and faithful worker will once have his share in the glory of fulfilment. This is the true belief, belief in the glorification of God in humanity; this is the belief which all religions must presuppose, this is the kernel of Christianity; and one great reason why religion has so little hold on the world now-a-days is, that it mostly leaves

this belief out of account. So long as it is considered mere fanaticism, or Utopian expectation, to believe in this Apotheosis of humanity, so long will it remain unrealized. To science is committed the great task of demonstrating, how all that exists, not only in our planet but in all the heavenly bodies, is bound together in one continuous chain. When this has been accomplished, the higher relations of things beyond the earth will be understood of themselves, and the belief in their perfect spiritual development will itself have become science.

But this triumph of the *child of God* will not be brought about by the suppression and annihilation of the *child of nature*, and the *child of humanity*. The full harmony of human nature can only be produced when its due weight is given to each side, and the higher nature draws the others up to equal perfection with its own.

Education will only then fulfil its task when it deals with human nature in its threefold aspect, and gives to each equal consideration. Hitherto, this has not been possible, both because child-nature was little understood before the present time, and because the means were wanting to respond from the very beginning to the necessities of the infant mind. It was Fröbel who first found the key to the nature of children, who learnt to understand their dumb natural language, who discovered a way of supplying them with their first mental nourishment, and of treating the *child of humanity*, from its first entrance into the world, as a being destined to become reasonable.

But where shall we find mothers fit to receive the educational legacy of genius bequeathed to our age, and to apply it in the right way? We have but to look around in all classes of society to see how few are the women really fit to become mothers and bringers-up of children. And even the best amongst them are deficient in the necessary knowledge and means. Fröbel has laid the basis of a true science for mothers, and we hope that the innumerable perversities of our educational systems, may be struck at their roots, and misery of every description thus warded off.

With the elevation of child-nature, the elevation of woman



and her veritable emancipation are closely bound up. The science of the mother initiates her inevitably into a higher branch of knowledge, whereby not mere dry intellectual power, but true sensibility and high spiritual clear-sightedness are developed in her. With the knowledge that a divine spark slumbers in the little being on her lap, there must kindle in her a holy zeal and desire to fan this spark into a flame, and to educate for humanity a worthy citizen. With this vocation of educator of mankind is bound up everything needful to place woman in possession of the full rights of a worthy humanity.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE FIRST UTTERANCES OF THE CHILD.

“Sich selbst und ihre Welt zu schaffen, welche Gott erschaffen, ist die Aufgabe der Menschheit, wie des Einzelnen.”

“To fashion himself, to fashion the world, which God created, is the task of humanity, as well as of the individual.”

Not Fröbel alone, others too before him, and at the same time, have given expression to the thought that, as the universal development of the human individual can only be carried on in relation to his race, so the first sure standard for his management and education must be obtained through observation of the development of collective humanity. Fröbel grounded his Kindergarten system to a great extent on this principle, without, however, carrying its application to the individual; a few explanations, therefore, by which this analogy may be more closely established, and Fröbel's system of development exhibited in its right light, will not be out of place here.

The first question that proposes itself is: “What are the principal utterances of the infant?” those, that is, which are more or less common to all children alike, and in which we can point to the beginnings of human efforts after culture.

When a child is born into the world, its first utterances are in the form of movements—outward movements of his arms and legs, and inner movements in the shape of screams. All development must go on through movement. Before a human being can in any degree begin to take possession of himself and of the outward world, his physical powers and organs must be to some extent unfolded; and thence it is that in the early years of life physical development takes the lead. The child of but a few months old, lying in its cradle, plays with its limbs, pulls

about its feet and fingers, strikes out its arms and legs, and thus makes its first acquaintance with its outward form, which in this way only can be impressed on its mind. As soon as the child can walk, its greatest need again is movement. To run hither and thither, to traverse the same ground in a dozen different cross and roundabout ways; to touch, handle, and examine everything with the ever restless hands, all this is common to every healthy child; and the greater its strength the greater its need for bodily exertion, which vents itself in running, jumping, climbing, wrestling, throwing, and lifting; and in the case of boys especially, urges on to a variety of games which develop strength and skill. No such object, however, is present to the child's consciousness, who is simply driven by his impulses, the satisfaction of which causes him amusement and joy. Whatever affords pleasure to children in general, and in all times, conduces always to their development in some way or other.

To forward physical development is thus the principal end of the child's activity. And do we not see a like process going on amongst savage uncultivated races; corporal exercises, and exertions, the object of which is generally to supply their needs, form the chief scope of their actions? The commencement of history with the heroic age exhibits in like manner bodily strength and skill as the highest aim of action, only here we have in addition the goal of heroic deeds, which were not merely concerned with material, egoistic needs, but also, and chiefly, with beloved human beings, and before all with the home and family. The putting forth of strength, the overcoming of obstacles or enemies, are always the highest pleasure of youth and early manhood. And even in middle age we still see the tournament, the duel, and the chase replacing to some measure as sport, the business of warfare. Nothing shows more clearly that the development of the physical powers constituted the highest happiness of mankind in its infancy, than the idea of a future life contained in Northern mythology, viz., that the dead would divide their existence in Walhalla between fighting and banqueting, and that the wounds received in battle would heal up at once, and the slain shortly after be drinking cheerily at the feast.

The members and organs of the body must have been developed up to a certain pitch, before they can serve as fit instruments for the mind. We see plainly that the wise direction of Providence has so ordered things, that every human being is attracted towards the kind of action necessary for his special development. The child is driven by an inward impulse, so to use his members and senses in his play, that these are developed and formed, just as the grown man in a primitive state is compelled to supply his own bodily wants in order that his bodily powers may be cultivated and made fit for a higher kind of activity. But every human being must take care that he does not remain at the mercy of these impulses, or he will degenerate, be led on to that which we call evil, and lose sight of the direction which would have conducted him to the destined end of his development. A right education consists in so strengthening and encouraging all the natural dispositions of a child that they may conduce to the end which nature has set before them. Our modern age, which makes so much less demand for expenditure of corporal strength, furnishes so much less opportunity for battling with outward material obstacles, imitates the Greeks, though by no means universally enough, in using gymnastics as a means of physical education for its youth, but there is no similar provision, or as good as none, for the first years of childhood, except where Fröbel's Kindergarten system is in vogue. Hence the first stage in the process of infant development is called "Exercises of the Limbs."

After the first development of rude strength, that of skill in handling stands out as the chief requisite at the commencement of human culture. Next to the need for movement, there is none so great in the early years of childhood as that of using the hands. The sense of touch is next to that of taste (which is itself a kind of touching with the tongue), the dominant one in the first stage of sensual growth.

At the beginning of life there is very little distinction between the different senses; they are all more or less fused together. The feeble capacity for work which any single sense possesses, necessitates the co-operation of all, when one is called upon to act. It is well known that children

must always *touch* everything; and not children only; all rough, uncultivated grown people are not satisfied with seeing an object, they must also bring their sense of touch in various ways to their assistance, in order to understand exactly the nature of the object.

In order that this most necessary member may be prepared for future work, nature encourages the child to use its hands incessantly in its play. Nothing is more contrary to nature than to forbid a young child the use of its hands, as is so often done in infant institutions. In order that they may keep their attention steadily fixed on the subject of instruction, generally premature and quite out of proportion to the children's stage of development, they are condemned to keep their hands folded, or crossed behind their backs. Through this indication of nature, Fröbel has discovered the right method of riveting a child's attention, viz., connecting all the instruction imparted to it with the use of the hands. The hand is the natural sceptre which raises man to the position of sovereign of the earth. With his hand man has fashioned for himself all his weapons of self-defence, whereas animals are provided with them by nature; with his hand he has made all the implements needful for mastering the forces and materials of nature, and for procuring the necessaries and ornaments of his life. Without the cultivation of the hand, industry and art would be impossibilities. But the marvellous organism of this member would not alone have been sufficient to produce the wonders of industrial art; for this the guiding co-operation of the mind was necessary. The activity of human beings differs in this from that of animals, that it is *work* in the full sense of the word, that the fingers are moved by the mind, and are obliged to carry out its plans and ideas. Therefore work is not a curse, but the highest blessing of mankind, and that which confers on it its nobility.

The play of children is for them, at the same time, work, for it serves to develop their members, senses, and organs. After the first unregulated feeling and grasping of their little hands, their favourite occupation is to dabble in some soft mess—earth, sand, or what not—and to try their skill at shaping and producing. Modelling is one of the first necessities of child-nature.

But even this instinct, if left to itself, will lead to no end: education must supply the material and guidance necessary for its development, must convert the aimless touching and fumbling into systematic construction, and direct the mere instinct into a channel of useful activity, all of which is done in the Kindergarten.

The first and easiest kind of construction, after the forms in clay and sand, is building. After the child has grubbed itself holes in sandhills, it goes a step further and builds houses, or whatever else its fancy may be able to invent in the way of architecture—and connected with this building are all manner of efforts towards the creation of a diminutive industry. The never-lessening fascination for all children of the adventures of Robinson Crusoe is chiefly due to the depiction of the strivings after culture of a solitary individual, in which children see their own strivings reflected as in a mirror.

One of the first ways in which human skill showed itself was undoubtedly in the erection of dwelling-places that would afford sufficient protection when natural holes in rocks or under the earth, or mud-huts in woods, were no longer enough. But when, through the improvement of the tools employed, their work progresses from its first rough outlines, and as the combinations of which the mind is capable multiply, and form perfects itself, there awakes in the child (as formerly in our ancestors) a feeling for the beautiful. This feeling is no doubt in part awakened even earlier by the influence which the forms and colours of natural objects exercise even on the least-formed character. Everything glittering, bright, or gaudy, excites pleasure in the child as in the savage; and in order to produce itself pleasure of this sort the child, in its own handiwork, feels more and more after the laws of rhythm and harmony, which, long before it can apprehend, it dimly and unconsciously forebodes. Observation of nature furnishes the patterns which the awakened creative spirit will idealize, and Art is born in the human soul, whether its expression be through form, colour, or sound.

But it is not only shaping and modelling that childish hands practise instinctively—drawing and painting are also attempted

by them. As Fröbel says, the child first perceives the *linear*—the outlines of objects. Whoever observes the actions of children will see how they almost invariably feel all round objects with their fingers—take in, so to say, by touch, the contours of tables, chairs, and other articles of furniture, sketch the outline of their own hands, and fingers in pencil, and so forth. The unpractised eye of a child will at first take in only the principal lines of objects, and of these first the straight ones, before it can master curves, surfaces, and filling in.

We notice the same characteristics in the people who first practised the science of architecture. Their drawings consist of outlines—linear representations—in straight strokes, without curves or perspective, as in the first attempts of children.

The awakening of the sense of sound can perhaps be traced back to the earliest moments of a child's life, for even before it can speak it stammers out rhythmic tones. It is this instinctive need of rhythm in children which calls forth from mothers and nurses their cradle-songs, and causes the rhythmic rocking and lulling of infants in their cradles and in the arms.

Attention to the differences of sound is one of the first awakenings of children, and early instruction in song avowedly one of the most effectual means of education. Savages, like children, have the keenest desire for song and dance—i.e., for rhythmic sound and movement. Rhythm is one of the great fundamental principles of all that is expressed in the motion of the spheres, the flight of birds, the course of the deer, in the excitement of the dance, and the whole wide harmony of creation and of human genius. The civilization of mankind, as of individual man, without the cultivation of the beautiful, is unthinkable—and music is before all other arts the awakening of the heart.

Before, however, the child has arrived at the production of his first little works of art, we may have noticed him grubbing in the earth, or transfixed in admiration of some animal or flower: nature has already worked upon him in various ways. It is not only to the fresh living air that children of the tenderest years stretch out their hands so joyfully, when the mother or the nurse produces hat and cloak to take them out of doors.

The forms and immediate impressions of surrounding nature already afford the infant being pleasure and delight.

When free use of the limbs has been gained, all children who are not prevented from so doing will be seen grubbing in the garden soil, throwing up mounds, and little by little making themselves small gardens of their own. At first the little spade, which accompanies the child out of doors, is only used for heaping up sand and stones, as an exercise of strength without aim. As soon, however, as any power of observation has begun to supplement the merely instinctive movements, there is awakened an impulse to till the ground and to make use of the productive force of nature; thus the child in its play, and thus man in the earliest stages of civilization, seeks to obtain better and more plentiful nourishment. Even though the instinct which moves the child to enclose its little garden with sticks be an undefined one, it is nevertheless that out of which the science of agriculture has arisen—the instinct, or need of possession.

Without possession, without ownership, the individuality of man would never have been fully stamped. Ownership widens personality by giving it power to work, means to carry out its will, and at the same time to satisfy the feeling of fellow-love by sharing its goods with others.

Were it not for the impulse which led him to agriculture, man would never have forsaken his nomadic life, would never have founded towns and communities, would never have carried development as far as the *nation*, and never have experienced the love of country.

It may seem to many ridiculous to pretend to see in the first little territorial possession of the child the starting-point of the love of one's country, and yet it is an undeniable truth that all and everything which is of importance in human life, be it little or great, has had its beginning in unnoticed utterances which have been the germs of future developments. The largest tree may have sprung from the least perceptible seed, and the greatest human action slumbers in the first sensations of the infant soul. Is not the love of one's own hearth the seed of the love of one's country?

But if bodily wants have been the first spurs to all human



culture, it is also unmistakably noticeable through the course of history, that by the side of every material need there is also a spiritual claim which makes itself felt. The tending and nurturing of that which serves firstly to satisfy selfish requirements, must at the same time awaken love. For whatever man carefully tends, the object or the being to whom he devotes his care, for whom he works, he also learns to love. That child would be a degenerate one that did not bestow its loving care on some objects or beings, were it at first only its playthings. With what tenderness do girls love their dolls, boys their toy-horses! but from these inanimate things—which are only alive in childish fancy—their affections are soon transferred to the animals of the house, and the flowers of the garden. To the child who has never called a piece of ground its own, has never tilled it in the sweat of its brow, has never expended its fostering love on plants and animals, there will always be a gap in the development of the soul, and it will be difficult for that child to attain the capacity for human nurture in a comprehensive sense. All tending and fostering require self-mastery and self-denial, and these are only learnt by gradual exercise, beginning with the little and mounting up to the great. Out of the soil which he tilled with labour and care, there accrued to man his first rights over the planet inhabited by him, and the first page of his later law-book contains the following principle: "Duties and rights should correspond to one another."

Not till the child has to a certain extent mastered the use of its limbs and senses, and its spontaneity and faculties of observation have been awakened, enabling it to make all manner of little experiments, not till then does the desire for knowledge (generally called curiosity) assert itself. True, this desire lies already at the bottom of the first groping and feeling of the hands, but it only then awakens with anything like distinctness, when the child begins to search into the causes of things and appearances with its thousand times repeated, "Why, whence, and wherefore." It must first have taken in from the outward world a series of impressions, images, and ideas, before thoughts will germinate in its mind. In order to *know*, the child makes experiments: it knocks different objects together, or throws

them on the ground, to test the solidity of their material ; it finds out their taste with its tongue ; tears or breaks them up to see what they are like inside, and by hundreds of like experiments searches out the nature and use of things.

To observation and investigation follows the *comparison* of one thing with another, and by comparison a perception of size, form, colour, number, &c., is arrived at. What child is there that does not measure the length and breadth of different articles, that does not ask : "which of them is the largest?" What child does not delight in counting the objects with which it is occupied ? in asking their names and uses ? Unfortunately the answers given to a child's eager inquiries are too often only empty words little calculated to satisfy them. It is not words alone, but above all demonstrations, which can furnish answers adapted to a child's understanding ; instruction in observation must begin with its earliest games, and not only at school. How brightly a child's eyes will sparkle at every fresh discovery, be it only a shining stone or a new wild-flower that it has found ; its joy over every fresh addition to its store of knowledge, to its treasure-house of ideas, is often, though it may express itself differently, no less than that of the wise man of antiquity, who, with the words, "I have discovered it," fell senseless to the ground. Just as children, when the desire for knowledge first awakens in them, begin by occupying themselves with the relations of space, with size and number, so did the learning of mankind begin with the elements of mathematics. The sole book which they could interrogate at the beginning of their development, was nature ; the observation and imitation of nature led from invention to invention, each of which increased the sum of knowledge, and widened the mental horizon. With a knowledge of nature—however superficial it may have been, and based merely on appearances—did the learning of mankind begin, and the learning of children must begin in like manner. It was inevitable that the first deductions from this experimental knowledge should lead to mathematical conclusions, should consist in the measurement of compared objects. Not till things had been classified according to their size and number, could they present themselves clearly to the understanding.

As the child carries on its first geographical observations by the exploration of the garden and the nearest environs of its dwelling-place, so the geographical knowledge of infant mankind began with the investigation of the neighbouring tracts of land: their soil, their products, their climates, &c. With the history of the family, the patriarchs, began the history of the world. What do children love more to hear than the stories of family adventures, what their parents and grandparents did, all that happened in their childhood, how they lived "when they were little?" It is one of the first thoughts that occurs to a child, whether others were like what he himself is, whether they, too, were once little. It was possibly this thought which once moved a child to ask the question, "if God had once been a little boy?" Children only understand what they can refer back to themselves, for they can only start from themselves.

But all these degrees of development, which we have pointed out, could only be reached by mankind (and the same applies to the child) in connection with his fellow-men, through the bond of society. The instinct of fellowship distinguishes even the higher races of animals from the lower, and is the deepest and most universal instinct of human nature, the source and the means of all his culture and civilization. Only by means of association can man conquer time and space, subdue to his own uses the forces of nature, and make himself more and more the all-powerful ruler of the earth, which he shall, in time, permeate and dominate even as God permeates and dominates the universe.

The social impulse shows itself as early as the first months of a child's existence. No child likes to be alone; it screams in its cradle if it thinks no human being is near it, and is quieted by the least word of kindly speech. But it is not merely the society of human beings in general that it wants—it needs especially that of its like, of children who are at the same stage of development, that is to say, of children of its own age. A child that has spent its childhood with grown-up people only will never possess the freshness and youthful joyousness which are awakened by life in a community; and prema-

ture seriousness, if not melancholy, will stamp its young features. What happy smiles, what beaming eyes, does one not see in even the youngest children, when they catch sight of other children as young as themselves. The play of children with each other forms the first basis of *all*, and more especially of *their*, moral cultivation. Without the love of his kind, without all the manifold relations of man to man, all morality, all culture, would inevitably collapse; in the instinct of fellowship lies the origin of state, of church, and of all that makes human life what it is.

But it is not only the morality of man which rests so closely on association, it is his religion also.

According to Fröbel the first religious instincts of children show themselves in their eagerness to join all gatherings of grown-up people; this Fröbel attributes to an undefined feeling that there is a common striving, a common idea uniting all the different individuals and causing them to assemble together. Thus, in the streets, or anywhere else, children will be seen flocking to any spot where several people are gathered together; nothing delights children more than to be allowed to join in gatherings of grown-up people, however much constraint be enforced upon them. The pleasure of the first visit to church has more to do with the delight in a concourse of many people than with the understanding of what is going on, or the participation in the spirit of the devotions, which the child is quite incapable of entering into. No doubt this is only the first unconscious aspiration penetrating the child's soul, and with it is bound up at the same time the love of mankind, which always precedes the love of God. It is only the love of its mother, of its parents, of those nearest to it, which can lead the young soul to God; out of this feeling is born the first spark of religious aspiration. As every sensation, and all other knowledge rest immediately on instinct, so, too, does religious knowledge. Fröbel's statement that by repeatedly observing how children, scarcely a year old, when being amused with a ball fastened to a string, will quickly take their eyes off the revolving ball and follow the string till they come to the hand which is turning it, he became convinced that even a child's instinct will drive

it from the contemplation of the appearance of things to the investigation of their cause, may be little instructive to those who do not concede to childish utterances a psychological basis. And yet no thinker will deny that all the conscious utterances of humanity have risen out of unconscious ones. But in this concession there is, to a certain extent, an acknowledgment of Fröbel's idea, that every conception of the mature mind has its root-point in an instinctive idea of the child's mind, which, being awakened by outward phenomena, shows itself first as a blind impulse; and that, therefore, all instruction must start with the concrete and mount up to abstract thought. Fröbel says: "From objects to pictures—from pictures to symbols—from symbols to ideas, leads the ladder of knowledge." And Pestalozzi expresses the same idea in the words: "There is nothing in the mind which has not passed into it through the senses."

The first intimation of a higher being came to mankind in the beginnings of its development—as it still does to the child—through the impressions of the visible world of nature. Man felt his own weakness in the presence of the giant forces of Nature, contemplated while still in the fermentation stage of its development, and bowed tremblingly before its unknown ruler. He saw that he himself and his existence were dependent on the bounty and beneficence of this Nature, which, like a loving mother showered all manner of blessings on him, and so he loved her in return, and worshipped her through symbols chosen from her own treasure-house, till at last, as he became to a certain extent acquainted with himself and his own being, he humanized the soul of nature after an ideal standard, and worshipped and feared it in the shape of his false gods.

Who made all the trees and flowers, birds and sheep? who made my father and mother? asks the child, seeking after the causes of things, because he is himself the beginning of a thinking, reasonable being. The roaring of the thunder makes him tremble like the savages—he imagines it to be the voice of a higher power; the reviving breath of spring fills him with an undefined sensation of wonder, and awakes in him forebodings of the invisible Benefactor whose visible image he loves in his parents. A child, with his lap full of sweet-smelling flowers

which he is going to weave into a garland, sits on the grass under a blossoming apple-tree in which the birds are warbling their spring song; the warm rays of the sun penetrate his being, a cooling wind plays gently round his face and showers over him the white blossoms of the tree; a flood of newly experienced bliss uplifts his soul, and his lips gently whisper: "It is the good God who is passing by"—the first revelation of the deity has entered his soul.

All religion begins with natural religion, but the God in nature must also be recognized in man, though this will not be till the God in nature has been apprehended. The development of nature and the development of mankind are mutually symbolic one of the other, and correspond in their different stages to the various stages of belief in God, through which mankind and the individual pass. That is to say, the spiritual development of the human soul proceeds according to the same system of laws as the development of the organisms of nature—for both have a common creator. And not only do they follow the same laws of development, but the sequence of stages is the same in both cases; everything ascends from the less to the greater. The budding-season of spring represents childhood; the blossom-time of summer, youth; the fruits of harvest, the maturity of manhood; and the decay of winter, that of old age. Everywhere in the world of nature we find analogies to the life of the human soul. All natural phenomena correspond to ideas, incorporate thoughts, and thus receive a higher meaning; or are the signs of spiritual truths to which they give expression. Thus they may be called *Symbols*.

The profound understanding shown by Fröbel of the path which education must follow, in order, in this aspect also, to keep in relation to human nature, will be more closely examined later on in this work.

The utterances of all children are the same, and their origin is the same, for they are based on inborn natural impulses. But Nature does nothing in vain, nothing without an object; all instincts which have not been deflected from their natural direction have but this one end: to further the development of the organization of nature, or of the human individual.

The child plays, is constrained to play, in order to develop itself. Its play is activity intended to awaken, strengthen, and form its powers and talents, so that it may be able to fulfil its destiny as a grown being.

In like manner the combined activity of mankind—the results of which appear in the progressive stages of civilization in the past and the present—can have no other end but the realization of perfected humanity through the development of all that concerns mankind, or, in other words, the fulfilment of the divine idea of humanity. But humanity is made up of individual men, and thus it follows of necessity, that the life's aim of the latter must be the same as that of the community of which they are members.

No one thinks of denying that the individual plant, or the individual animal, develops itself according to the laws of its tribe. And it is only because we understand how the development of the tribe and family of a plant or an animal proceeds that we know how to manage the individual specimens. According to the various modifications of this natural method of treatment, is the special, individual character of animals stamped on them; and this shows itself most distinctly in house-dogs. Amongst the same tribe of dogs, for instance, one may be much more obedient, faithful and dependent, or more vicious and faithless, than others.

The utterances of every different being bear, likewise, the stamp of the tribe to which it belongs, and man is no exception to the rule. It follows, therefore, that the instinctive, involuntary expressions and actions, which are common to all the individuals of a race, must serve the natural end of their development.

The child is as little conscious of this end as is the savage in a state of nature, or the uncultivated grown being, but both are driven and led by inward impulses and outward attractions to procure the satisfaction of their needs, first in order to preserve themselves in existence, and then to attain the highest possible state of well-being. The exertions and practices necessary to this end are at the same time the means of their culture.

The history of the development of mankind teaches us how the bodily necessities, food, clothing, shelter from inclement weather, danger, &c., and later on the spiritual needs, social intercourse, desire after the true and the beautiful, spurred men on to the discovery of all that constitutes our present possessions in industry, art, and science.

Just as mankind through its stage of unconsciousness was prepared for a succeeding higher stage of development and culture, till it should attain to self-consciousness and knowledge of its destiny, so does the playful activity of the child prepare it for its later conscious existence. But this end will only be accomplished when education holds out to the instinctive feeling and groping of childhood the necessary guidance, and the fit material to work on. To do this is the object of Fröbel's Kindergarten, which follows out in miniature the chief features of the history of human culture, places in the way of children similar experiences, and thus prepares them for, and makes them capable of, understanding the life of the present day, which is an outcome of the past.

It need hardly be said, that by the following of the history of culture we do not mean the depiction of the different epochs of culture, or of the nationalities which represent them (as is often erroneously thought), but such a course of instructional activity as shall reproduce in miniature in the work of the child the progressive development of the race, as manifested in the work of mankind.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE REQUISITES OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL AND FRÖBEL'S THEORY  
OF EDUCATION.

“Ziel der Natur ist Entwicklung. Ziel der geistigen Welt : Bildung. Das Problem dieser Welt ist ein Bildungsproblem, dessen Lösung nach bestimmten göttlichen Gesetzen vor sich geht.”

“The purpose of nature is development. The purpose of the spiritual world is culture. The problem of this world is an educational one, the solution of which is proceeding according to fixed divine laws.”

EDUCATION is emancipation—the setting free of the bound-up forces of the body and the soul. The inner conditions necessary to this setting free or development all healthily-born children bring with them into the world, the outer ones must be supplied to them—and that through education,

If in the spring the hard coverings of plants are to burst open so that the buds of leaves and blossoms may be set free and sprout, air and sunlight, rain and dew must be supplied to them. The inner force will be sufficient to break open the shells if the outward conditions are not wanting. In nature every necessity or want meets with corresponding satisfaction, and this without conscious will or exertion according to unchanging laws and principles. The course of the sap in plants, which ascends and descends regularly from the root to the blossom, and by a continual process of expansion and contraction forms the leaf-buds, corresponds to the course of the blood in animal and human organisms, starting from the heart and returning to the heart, and in the action of the ventricles of the heart exhibiting in like manner expansion and contraction.

Everything in the kingdom of nature, however different the stages of progress may be, comes under one universal law

and development means the same as *progress according to law*,—systematic going on from the unformed to the formed, from chaos to cosmos.

And as does the physical so also must the spiritual development proceed in systematic fashion, or education would be impossible. For what we call education is influencing the development of the child, guiding and regulating it as well in its spiritual as in its physical aspect. But how common a thing it is to hear people maintain that during the instinctive, unconscious period of a child's life, it should be left to follow its impulses entirely, and no attempt made to deal with it systematically. But, as the soul undoubtedly begins to unfold and form itself in the period of unconsciousness in the same systematic manner as in later periods, any such assertion must be erroneous and based on false premises. Spiritual development must proceed in as regular and systematic a course as organic development, seeing that the physical organs are intended to correspond as implicitly to the soul, which they serve, as cause corresponds to effect. Psychology has determined the order of the development of the soul, as has physiology that of the circulation of the blood, but the former science has chiefly concerned itself with the already more or less formed soul of the adult, which, through self-will and voluntary deflection from the path of order, is always to a certain extent the slave of arbitrariness, and the growth of the soul in the period of childhood has been little studied or observed.

Fröbel used constantly to say when lecturing: "If you want to understand clearly the regular working of nature you must observe the common wild plants, many of which are designated as weeds: it is seen more clearly in these than in the complexity of cultivated plants." And for this purpose he used to grow different species of wild plants in pots.

The same holds true of the human plant. The young child's soul, while yet in its primitive and instinctive stage, without forethought and without artificiality, exhibits to the really seeing and understanding observer the systematic regularity, the *logic* of nature's dealings in her development process, spite of the variety of individual endowment.

In the foregoing essay we attempted to demonstrate what may be called the *universal* in the "utterances" of child-nature, that which sets the stamp of the race on each individual. Through these utterances, in so far as they repeat themselves in each individual and may consequently be reduced to a law, we arrive at the keynote to the knowledge of the natural order of child development.

Fröbel says: "There is continuous connection in the spiritual life as a whole, as there is universal harmony in nature." And certainly it cannot be otherwise: the eternal law of order, which reigns throughout the universe, must also determine the development of the human soul. But the educator who would supply the human bud in right manner with light and warmth, rain and dew, and so induce it to emancipate itself from its fettered condition, and through the unfolding of all its slumbering forces to blossom into worthy life, must not only understand the law but must also possess the means of acting in accordance with the law: *i.e.*, his method of education must follow the same systematic plan as nature does, and the outward practical means must correspond to the method.

No one will dispute the assertion that *instruction* is only worthy of the name when it is methodical. Instruction of such kind is a branch of education: but branch and stem spring from the same root. However much may have been done, from the days of antiquity up to the present day, to improve educational and instructional systems, and to adapt them more closely to the natural process of development, and thus attain the result aimed at—*knowledge*—in the best and quickest manner, the laws of development of the infant mind are, nevertheless, still veiled in obscurity. No infallible chart has yet been found, which, as the magnet to the mariner, will show the educator invariably the right direction to steer in, spite of all ebbs and flows, spite of all the thousand different courses that each vessel, each character, according to its individual destination, has to strike into. But so long as some such fixed method of education remains undiscovered, so long will even the best education be more or less an arbitrary work.

It was also Pestalozzi's chief endeavour to discover and apply that which he called "the principle of the organic," and to him, and his educational forerunners, are we indebted for our first knowledge of the course of child development, and for the means by which education and instruction have been more systematically organized. Without their preliminary efforts Fröbel might not, perhaps, have discovered the method whereby he built upon the foundation laid by them, and brought their, and more especially Pestalozzi's, practical endeavours to completion. In like manner will Fröbel's successors be called on to develop further what he has laid the foundation of.

In one of his letters to me, Fröbel says: "As motion in the universe depends on the law of gravitation, so do movements in the life of humanity depend on the law of unity of life."—And further; "As the laws of the fruit are developments of the laws of the flower, and the laws of the flower developments of the laws of the bud, and the laws of bud, flower, and fruit, are at the same time one with the laws of the whole tree or plant; so are the laws of the development of spiritual life higher outcomes, or developments, of the laws of the solar and planetary system of the universe. Were this not the case man could not understand the latter, for he can only understand that which is homogeneous to him. And, according to this, the laws of the development of life, in the region of the spiritual, must be apprehended, demonstrated, and built upon, in the same manner as the laws of the formation of the world. It will be the work of the Kindergarten to point out the application of these laws, as one stage of progressive human cultivation."

Fröbel's aim and efforts, may, I think be summed up thus: he was striving to hit on a regular course or method of *education*, corresponding to the method of *instruction* long ago established by pedagogic science.

As instruction aims before all things at imparting knowledge, so education has for its chief object moral culture, the formation of the character; and for this end it is above all necessary that there should be freedom of individual movement, room

for the development of personality. It may be asked: "How can there be one law for all and everything? But does not the infinite variety of creation rest on the eternal basis of the unity of the Creator? Are not all the heavenly bodies alike subject to the law of gravitation, and are they thereby hindered from the development of the greatest individuality? It is an undoubted fact that each heavenly body differs from another both in its organisms and its productions. We see trees and plants of the most different kinds, thriving in the same forest, under the same conditions of soil, climate, &c., each individual growth assimilating to itself those outward influences only which befit its special nature. So the personality of the child will only absorb into itself out of that which is presented to it, whatever corresponds to its special wants and endowments.

And as it is only in consequence of the *order* of all movement in space that the free movement of the heavenly bodies is possible, and that disturbing collisions are avoided, so in the child's nursery, as in the state, it is through systematic government alone that freedom is attained—freedom of the individual through the freedom of all.

That education should be carried on in accordance with nature is granted by nearly all educationalists, at any rate by those of modern times, as one of its first requisites. And what is according to nature is according to law.

Now it is both according to law and to nature, that the progressive development—of the individual as well as of mankind—should require at each new stage, new conditions, and new modes of assistance. The bell-glass which protects the germinating plant will not cover the fullgrown tree, and the man cannot wear the clothes which fitted him in his childhood. The conditions of life change and become higher in every new epoch and generation, and it must necessarily follow that education should make higher and more comprehensive demands on us, than on the generations before us.

Amongst our Germanic forefathers, who lived in their forests clothed in bear skins, the standard of their children's education was: for the boys, that they should learn the use of the spear and the bow, and to mount a horse in the battle or

the chase, that they should know the rights and duties of their tribe, and the customs of the service of the gods : for the girls, that with womanly chastity they should combine skill in cooking, spinning, and housekeeping. But this standard no longer satisfied the succeeding age of chivalry. And the culture of knights and their womankind does not satisfy the demands of our day, because the general conditions of life have become different.

And with these changes of conditions the nature of man, physical and spiritual, changes also. Not of course in its essential features : not in the shape and conformation of his body ; nor altogether in his impulses, passions, and inclinations, or in his processes of thinking, feeling, and willing. Man has at all times one head, two hands, and two feet ; at all times he suffers and enjoys, according to the impressions produced on him ; thinks and endeavours, in human fashion. But are not the barbarian and the cultivated human being just as much distinguishable from one another by their outward appearance and demeanour as by their inclinations and endeavours, their thinking and willing ? The physical development of the working-classes is so universally influenced by their mode of life that in them the bones and muscles preponderate ; whereas in those who lead a more intellectual life the nervous system dominates. The organization of the head of a thinker differs in an important manner both from that of a savage and from that of a manual labourer. This difference is transmitted to posterity ; it is not only physically that children bear the stamp of their parents, they also inherit from them mental dispositions. The child of the Hottentot will be born with different dispositions from that of the cultivated European, and the child of the nineteenth century from one of the barbaric age, because the progress of the race must also express itself in the individual.

In plants and animals we see the influence of cultivation very plainly. The wild yellow root, or carrot, must for instance go through twenty generations of culture before it becomes eatable ; and after only five generations of neglect it will again revert to its wild condition. The horse breeder knows that the offspring of a

noble race is itself noble, and therefore requires higher care than that of a lower race. Manifold experience teaches how difficult it often is to educate the child of uncouth parents and ancestors—though not necessarily of savage ones—for a life of refined cultivation.

It lies still before the explorers in the science of humanity to discover and demonstrate more exactly the powerful influences of mental culture on the bodily and mental organism, but it cannot be doubted that the higher the culture of a nation has risen, so much the higher endowments will its children bring with them into the world.

Can there then be any doubt of the necessity for continual reconstruction of educational systems, as of all other things, and will any persist in maintaining that, what of old was good enough and sufficient for the education of mankind is also sufficient now-a-days? To each age, however, belongs a special virtue, and it is precisely this which is commonly overlooked by the reformers of the directly succeeding age. However much we may be justified in claiming for our own age great advance in all school and instructional arrangements, there is also no doubt that the preceding generation excelled us in many respects with regard to education. Cultivation of character, moral earnestness and religion—the foundation of all education—were prevalent in far higher measure. The care and attention which the ancient Greeks bestowed in training the body for strength, skill and beauty, are also equally wanting in our day. Furthermore it cannot be denied that the ruling tendency of education at the present day has resulted in a one-sided development of the understanding, and in the stupefying system of overcramming for which our rising generation is remarkable.

Can any one, moreover, be so blind as not to see the black shadows looming in the pathway of the present generation, so deaf as not to hear the warning-cry of manifold misery resounding on all sides. The blame of this melancholy state of things must undoubtedly be partly attributed to faulty education. The characteristic features of our age are:—Knowledge without practice; practice without the stamp of individuality: thought precociously developed before fancy and feeling, like to

bud and blossom, have matured the fruit; insight without power of action; the capacity for ruling matter degraded to the service of the material nature; no reverence for the all-permeating spirit of God, no belief in its eternal working—human intellect regarded as the highest court of appeal. The childlike simplicity which surrenders itself to a higher and an invisible power is now almost unknown, for its source in the original unsullied nature of childhood becomes early corrupted, and education directs the mind only to outward things: learning has come to be little more than acceptance of what is imparted, leaving no room for any original material to come to the surface, and stifling the innate faculties. On all sides there is a crying out for new rights, without any regard for the idea of duty. Well does a modern poet lament:

\* “In Trauern blick’ ich hin auf das Geschlecht von heute,  
Wie es die künstlich-frühe Reife blüht;  
Früh schon des Zweifels, der Erkenntnis Beute,  
In eine Zukunft schaut, die dunkel oder wüßt.”

And because this is the case we see everywhere restlessness, discontent, a piteous seeking for unattained happiness—a deep vein of sadness runs through modern society, in whose very strains of joy tones of sorrow mingle, and which, in the midst of wanton pleasure-seeking, longs with wailings and yearnings after the forfeited higher good which alone can satisfy the ideal cravings of the soul. The world waits as for a magic spell, for a new generation, fashioned for a new world, capable of the deeds which that new world demands, open to new truths—who shall usher it in?

Every penetrating reform, in whatsoever field it may be attempted, requires a new truth, a new idea of genius for its foundation. But such an idea will seldom seem new in its entirety; the pages of history will almost certainly prove that the same idea has already been expressed, though in a different setting, by former thinkers, and that, constantly recurring, it

\* “In sadness I gaze on mankind of to-day,  
Who of premature culture the penalty taste;  
To doubt and to learning a too-early prey,  
They look forth on a future of darkness or waste.”



has gained a standing in different epochs. And whenever this is the case there must be something important in question which has not hitherto attained to full development. Often it is only a lucky hit that is needed to convert into reality an idea that has long been in preparation.

Whether it has happened to Fröbel by a like lucky hit to give a new basis to education, experience and the application and carrying out of his method must show. A written exposition can do no more than represent the matter in its general outlines, and thus awaken the desire to understand it better, and to test its merits by application.

The most difficult of all difficult tasks is without doubt to give a universally enlightening definition to a new truth—great or small—for new truths always lie outside the general mental horizon. Even Fröbel himself, therefore, has had little success in describing his educational theory in its full compass, and he is, perhaps, even more justified than Hegel and other thinkers in complaining that he has not been understood. Far be it from us to pretend here to expound this idea in its whole breadth and depth—we would only attempt by means of the following short statements to open up the way to an understanding of it.

*The process of spiritual development goes on also according to fixed laws.*

*These laws correspond to the general laws which reign throughout the universe, but are at the same time higher, because suited to a higher stage of development.*

*This system of laws must be able to be traced back to a fundamental law, however much the latter may vary in its formulæ.*

Fröbel calls it: "The law of opposites and their reconciliation" or "the law of balance."

There is nothing, animate or inanimate, to which this law does not apply, for everything consists of related opposites: a proposition always implies the counter proposition—the existence of God presupposes that of the world, that of the world presupposes that of God; man, as a being both conscious and unconscious, links together nature—or unconscious ex-

istence, with God—absolute conscious existence. The inward and outward aspects of things are opposites, which the thing itself connects together. This universal law manifests itself in nature in the interchange of matter. Every organism possesses the property of giving out on the one hand of its own substance, and taking in on the other what has emanated from other organisms. And these opposites of giving out and taking in are connected by assimilation and appropriation—a process which varies in each different organism. It is by interchange of this sort that the physical world is kept in continual balance, and connection of all its parts.

In the intellectual world this law manifests itself in a similar, or at least an analogous, manner. Mental development is also exchange—a mental interchange of matter. The soul takes in from outside, through the senses, a stock of impressions and images, which by an inward process it converts into thoughts and conceptions, and gives out again to the world as words and actions. Without intercourse and exchange of ideas with other minds, man would never learn to think. The process of thinking is impossible without comparison, and in order to compare there must be variety at hand; but the most distinct difference constitutes only *relative* opposites (absolute opposites do not exist), which are blended together by means of concomitant similarities. Therefore, thought is also the connection of opposites.

This long recognized law which, whether in the centrifugal and centripetal forces which rule throughout the cosmic universe, or in the inspiration or expiration of the lungs, or the expansion and contraction of the sap of plants, &c., has established itself as the law of all life, growth, and being—this law Fröbel applies to education. For, he argues, if this law guides the process of spiritual development in early childhood, that is in the period of non-deliberate action, educators must regard it as the law of nature for the human mind if they are to proceed according to nature (*Natur gemäss\**), and they must apply

\* The word *Natur-gemäss* (according to nature) must never be understood to refer to nature in its distorted, corrupted condition, in which sense the word *natural* is often used.—*Note by the Author.*

this law in their method, and above all lead children to apply it themselves in whatever they do. And this from the beginning of the child's development, in the stage of unconscious existence, which is the germ of all others. In this way the human mind will be trained to render to itself an ever clearer and clearer account of the laws of its thinking and acting, while an opposite method of education would more or less hinder the mind from attaining the power of clear thought.

For instance, a child directly it is born begins to take in through its senses impressions from outside. It perceives heat and cold, light and darkness; it arrives gradually at distinguishing between hard and soft, solid and fluid, near and distant, &c. These are all so many kinds of opposites. As long as this perceptive faculty is but feebly developed, it will not easily distinguish slight degrees of difference, as, for instance, a hard material from one only a little less hard, a near object from one a very little farther, and so forth. The more marked the contrast in the qualities of different objects (for it is not the things themselves that form opposites, but their qualities) the more easily will they be distinguished from one another. Now to be able to distinguish is the first step towards understanding. Is it not, therefore, self-evident that this process will be facilitated if the objects with which the child is to occupy itself are presented to it in the form of opposites? If, for instance, it is to learn to distinguish between the size of things, let two objects, relatively great and little, be given to it, or for distinction of colour two contrasting colours, and so forth.

In Fröbel's "second gift," for instance, the sphere (a single surface without the distinction of edges and corners) and the cube (many surfaces, edges, and corners) form opposites which the cylinder (containing both a round surface like the sphere, and flat surfaces and edges like the cube) combines in its form, thus connecting two opposites.

Through these shapes, and by means of the sense of sight, the child receives impressions, nothing more. But out of these impressions, *feeling* and *willing* arise, and later on understand-

ing and thinking, and it is because all later development depends on them that early impressions are so important.

As God the Creator has everywhere in creation placed opposites side by side in order to work out harmony, so must man proceed in like fashion in all *his* works, if he is to produce harmony. All art is based on the principle of contrasts. The musician in the trichord connects together two discordant tones; the artist in his pictures has to connect light and shade, dark tints and bright ones, by means of middle tints, &c.

The child too, in the Kindergarten, plaits and twists in like manner; lays one little stick horizontally, another perpendicularly, and a third half horizontally, half perpendicularly, in order by means of the slanting line to connect together the two others.

And, whilst the child is applying this simple law in a thousand different ways in its occupation, it is being led on to creativeness, which means, as far as mankind is concerned, out of given materials to form new combinations. Without law or rule, *i.e.*, method, this is not possible. The mode of procedure in all work, whether industrial or artistic, must be at bottom systematic.

If the child in all its little productions, even those of its play, has persistently applied this principle of its own mental development, although at the time conscious of nothing more than that by this simple means it could produce the most manifold shapes, figures, &c., far more will have been done for its general development, than if it had been at once prepared for all the various branches of school instruction. Arrangement, distribution, classification, without which no instruction can be carried on, and clear thought is impossible, will have become habits of his life, and will bring to him clearness of feeling, will and thought, the only certain foundations of culture.

As a result of the foregoing we find the first general educational requisites to be :—

Assistance of spontaneous development which shall accord with the laws of nature;

Consideration for the outward conditions of life of each epoch, and for each personality;

Understanding and application of the universal laws of spiritual development.

With regard to the special service rendered by Fröbel, let me here repeat what I have already mentioned before, that Fröbel has discovered the method and practical means of disciplining, or of developing, body, soul and mind, will, feeling and understanding according to the systematic laws of nature.

In the practical application of the positive and individual portion of it, the simplicity and naturalness of Fröbel's method stand out markedly, and at once do away with any idea of its being pedantic or artificial, and in opposition to the natural free development of the child.

No one will deny that the smallest *practical* discovery which shall turn our educational system in a direction corresponding to the demands of human nature, and of modern times, is of immense importance, and must contribute towards facilitating and expediting the great reformatory process of our age. Though education cannot do all that is needed in this respect, it can do a great deal.

## CHAPTER V.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD.

Morro.—Die Erneuerung der Gesellschaft hängt von deren sittlicher Umbildung ab, und diese zumeist von Verbesserung des Erziehungswesen. Die Erfolge der Erziehung aber beruhen auf deren Anfang in der ersten Kindheit, und diese ruht in den Händen der Frauen.—Br. M.

“The renovation of society depends on its moral reform, and this again chiefly on improvement in the nature of education. But the results of education depend on its first commencements, and these are in the hands of women.”

“POOR humanity!” exclaims Madame de Staël at the sight of all the manifold miseries of mankind. With much more truth might one exclaim: “Poor childhood!” for in childhood, and its perverted management, lies the source of the greater part of this misery. Adult mankind has weapons wherewith to repel the assaults of temptation and trouble; helpless childhood is exposed without power of resistance to the evils of mismanagement and neglect, and the consequence is that human beings find themselves beginning the battle of life already maimed by thousands of wounds. If only the human soul were better guarded and fostered in its infancy, how many fewer despairing men and women should we see!

How much has there not been said and written—before and after Pestalozzi’s “Book for Mothers”—on the importance of first impressions, and yet what boundless neglect do we see of this first period of the growth of the human soul! If a tender young leaf be pricked in spring-time with the finest needle it will show a scar of continually increasing size till it withers in the autumn; how many such needle-pricks does not the young child-soul receive—and in them the beginnings of many scars, bad habits, faults and vices? Is there a single human being who has not to bear the weight—often a very heavy one—of

the consequences of some neglect in childhood? For each one of us the roots of our being are planted in our childhood, and as are the roots so will be the tree. The good and the bad alike, if they could see down into the lowest depths of their existence, would be able to trace back their good deeds and their evil ones, in their latest ramifications, to the seeds sown in infancy. It is true that the origin, both of physical and moral diseases, lies to a great extent in the innate dispositions which are the heritage of parents and ancestors, but it depends upon early care and training whether these dispositions be developed or suppressed. Every single evil tendency can be overcome to a certain degree.

Nearly all mothers, and especially young ones, think that *their* children, so softly cradled in the lap of love, are in no way to be pitied, that they are protected from all moral hurt, as from every breath of cold air. And yet how much harm is done both to their bodies and souls by this very mother-love if it be not accompanied by right understanding.

How often do we see a young mother, in any class of society, enter on her educational office fully prepared for it, even let us say so far as the management of health is concerned? And even if she herself be thoroughly fitted for her work, can she prevent nurses, and nurserymaids, or whoever else may assist her in it, from committing a hundred errors? Why is it that more than half of mankind die during the first ten years of life, and of these again the greater number in the first three years? How few children of all ages are really blooming and healthy-looking, especially in large towns. The little pale faces are a heavy reproach to parents and nurses, and little do these thoughtless mothers consider what a terrible responsibility they have undertaken in view of the well-being of humanity.

Here, for instance, is a child who can scarcely hold up its great heavy head. When the mother was at her balls, the nurse used to give it decoctions of milk and poppy-heads, so that whilst it was sleeping soundly she might keep a rendezvous. The water in the little one's head dooms it to an early death, or—still worse—to idiocy for life! There again is one whose tottering, uncertain gait tells of bandy legs. Born with a scrofu-

lous tendency, it was set too early on the weak limbs which were not able to support it. In the thick waist and pale face of another child are seen the results of over-feeding, the work, perhaps, of a good-natured nursery-maid who was in the habit of sharing her coffee, coarse bread, potatoes &c. with her young charge. Inflammation of the chest brought on during the first months of its life by a draught when it was being washed, have developed in another child the seeds of consumption. Who could enumerate all the seemingly trifling causes which, followed up by later injurious influences, destroy the health of millions? And in depriving a child of health we deprive it also of the power to work and to be of any use in the world. A sickly child is always, and indeed must be, a coddled and a spoilt one, and grows up into a man of ill-health, unable properly to maintain his family, or a suffering housewife and mother who cannot fulfil her duties.

But the first pernicious *moral* influences work almost more terribly.

The apparent passiveness of the young being easily deceives its elders as to its really too ready susceptibility to outward impressions. The helpless infant is supposed to be insensible to disorder, insobriety, vulgarity or ugliness of surroundings, while all the time the impressions are being received which will determine the points of view from which the grown man or woman will look out later on the world.

Each one of us is the offspring of his age and his nation. This means to say: each one bears the stamp of those characteristics of his age and nation amongst which he is born: and each one reflects the influences of his immediate and more distant surroundings. In this respect too each one is the offspring of his family, of his mother, his nurse, his nursery, his playfellows &c., for it is in these that his century and his nation are first represented to him. The special stamp of individuality which his body and soul will bear in later life will be traceable to these first impressions which influenced the inborn dispositions like rain or sunshine. The boy who has been reared in the turmoil of camp-life will bear a different stamp of character from one who has grown up in peaceful quiet



amongst the flowers of a garden. The Spartans and Athenians grew up in the self-same country, under the same sky—but how differently did culture and morals colour their national characters. Culture and morals are the result of education—of that which is bestowed as well as of that which goes on of itself.

There are certainly few errors which have had such a pernicious and hampering effect on the development of good in humanity as the one which treats children in their earliest childhood merely as *physical* beings, and regards the soul at this period as wholly insusceptible and without requirements. The soul which makes its existence unmistakably known later, must have grown out of a former, if only a dormant state, in which state it must have acquired the strength to manifest itself at last openly. The soul then exists as such already in infancy. But in what manner does it arrive at its later development? It can only be through impressions received from outside, through the influence of the surroundings. Body and soul at the beginning of life may be said to be *one*, and bodily desires and needs are seemingly all that express themselves. But the foundation of these bodily desires is a spiritual one. The organs must first be strengthened before the soul can make use of them, but simultaneously with their development the soul itself grows, and according to the form which these organs, whether limbs or senses, take will be in great measure the spiritual stamp. Every physical impression is at the same time a spiritual one, and all the more lasting in proportion to the youth and want of power of resistance of the being in question. The reason why children so easily contract the mien, gestures, and habits of their surroundings is that they have no power of resistance—everything outside them is stronger than themselves, and they have to borrow from all outward influences for their own growth. Hence they are good, cheerful and contented, or bad, morose, and discontented just according to their surroundings.

It is a great mistake, for instance, to imagine that the vulgar, unrefined manners of servants have no effect on children in their first two or three years, or even in their first months. It

is evident that a child grows like its nurse from the fact that in a greater or less degree it catches her expressions. The foundations of the strongest passions, failings, and vices may be laid when the human being is in its earliest stage, a mere infant in arms. To have been in infancy witness of improper behaviour may have been the beginning of lust. Anger and lying most children learn from the servants of the house—if not from their parents!—Picking leads to stealing. Many a promising lad has been led on to deceit and theft from no other cause than that his mother was wanting in order and management, and unable to teach him either by example or guidance; or, because she was too weak to resist the wishes of her child; he did not learn to bear contradiction in childhood, and in after years he could not accustom himself to it.

Many a conscientious mother will doubtless smile to herself and think: I am not guilty of these sins. I wash and dress my child myself, or am present while it is being done; I have good nurses to look after it; I feed it myself; I play and talk with it to develop its little mind; I do not let it associate with vulgar people, and so forth. And nevertheless it was the child of a very conscientious and cultivated mother—a little girl of six years old—who was assaulted by a soldier, in a public park, in the coarsest and most improper manner, because it hindered his *tête-à-tête* with the nurse. And every glance into the world reveals suchlike hideous pictures. They shew that even the best of mothers cannot be too careful, can never be over rich in precautions, and that they all need preparation for their calling.

No less sure in its vengeance is the early neglect of the intellect. What a multitude of “confused heads” does one see in our days, persons incapable of mastering the wealth of ideas of the present day. One great cause of this is not unfrequently found in the meaningless playthings heaped together without the slightest order, with which the year-old child is set to amuse itself. For inward clearness proceeds from outward order. As soon could the eyes of a grown person take in at a glance all the innumerable objects of an industrial exhibition, as the young uncultivated eye of an infant distinguish from one another the shapeless, generally

broken objects, through which it has to acquire its first knowledge. Yes, knowledge! For can the child understand anything else before it has, to a certain extent, learnt to know form, colour, material, size, number, &c.—that is to say the qualities of things? But this faculty of distinguishing begins partly in the earliest years, as the child itself plainly manifests; it would not otherwise crow with delight when its hat and cloak are produced to take it out of doors, or cry when the sight of bath and towel indicate to it preparations for washing.

No one would dream of expecting a child of six or seven years old, because it had been supplied with the necessary materials—paper, ink, books, &c., to learn to read and write by itself without instruction, and how should an infant, up to its third year, learn without assistance to distinguish all the many different things which surround it, and their qualities, in the clear manner which is necessary to develop in it clear perception? without the proper materials and without help, it will also learn badly what it has to know in order to be prepared for later school instruction.

It is through the senses that the young being takes in the first nourishment for the faintly glimmering spark of the soul.

As physical nourishment, and especially that given in early years, is by no means a matter of indifference as regards the growth of the body, so it cannot be considered immaterial what kind of spiritual food is afforded at this early period. The development of the soul does not depend merely on the fact of the limbs, senses, and organs, being formed—it depends also on *how* they are formed.

As eagerly as the babe at the breast sucks in its mother's milk, so do the senses (eyes and ears above all) suck in the nourishment of the soul. Fröbel calls this spiritual sucking in "*ein Augen*," because the eye is specially active in the process. In this first period of existence, when the child is a sucking-babe, receptiveness is the dominant faculty. Just as the bees gather from thousands of flowers the stores with which they prepare their honey, so from the outer world the child's soul collects a store of images which must stamp themselves upon it, and grow into ideas, before the first signs of spontaneous

mental activity can show themselves outwardly. Up to this point the forces of the soul work only inwardly and invisibly, like the seed of a plant before it has begun to sprout. And as seeds will wither, and come to nothing, if they be not watered and tended, so will mental faculties if proper care be denied them.

And in what else can this first fostering of the infant soul consist than in surrounding it with influences and images of beauty, truth, and morality? These are the three objects of human, and therefore also of infant, development.

The first requisite then is to discover the right method by which children should take in knowledge, before the period in which the understanding begins to work. Because it has hitherto been supposed that the *feelers* of the infant soul take in all the nourishment necessary to it, just as the instinct of the young animal leads it to its proper food, no external care has been considered necessary. But no more than a young animal could satisfy its hunger in a sandy desert, can the instinct of the child's soul still its cravings where the surroundings offer nothing that it can make use of. But it may be asked, do not nature and the outward world present everywhere forms, colours, sounds, and materials, which may serve as pictures for the child's inner world? No doubt they do, but in a scattered form, not collected together and arranged in such manner that they can be taken in by the eye that has as yet seen nothing, the ear that has heard nothing—not in the simple and elementary form required by the unpractised eye. Can a child's eye in its earliest years take in the beauty of a landscape with its thousand different features and gradations, even when it is represented on a small scale in a picture? Or can a child's ear convey a Beethoven sympathy, even as a general impression only, to the soul? Impossible! For the organs have not yet the necessary strength for sustaining such complicated images, nor the soul the capacity for grasping them. Influences and attractions of undue magnitude and power weaken the young organs, and leave the soul wholly indifferent, because untouched.

As nature has prepared for the child its fit bodily food in its mother's milk, so must the mind of the mother prepare the food for her child's soul by placing all the widely scattered

natural objects in such manner before its senses that the feelers, which these put out, may be able to find and take hold of the right materials. And further, by removing from its surroundings whatever may influence perniciously the germinating soul.

The mother has to paint the great pictures of nature and reality in miniature, to separate single objects, to select and dress up, so as to produce symbols of beauty, truth, and morality adapted to infant comprehension.

But to determine these symbols for the earliest stage of development is an art, and a difficult art; it involves a knowledge of human nature, of physiology and psychology: how shall mothers, *all* mothers, attain to it?

The maternal instinct, maternal love, is, indeed, a magic power enabling the simplest women often to work wonders; and without this wonder of love humanity would hardly have developed itself in its infancy. But at the same time every mother is not capable of finding out for herself what her child's soul requires, in order that none of its faculties may be arrested, but all brought to their full development.

It is always individuals who find out what all need. For all its necessities mankind has had its discoverers, its inventors, its geniuses, who have satisfied each want in turn, and who, as missionaries of God, have reformed and beautified human existence and quenched the thirst of the human soul after truth.

Fröbel has fulfilled the mission of satisfying the need and higher demands of childhood, arising out of the new stage of human development, and of furnishing mothers with the symbols by means of which, as by the leading-string of truth, they may lead young souls through the first labyrinth of life. His mind it was that selected and arranged materials, forms, colours and sounds with elementary simplicity, and in such a manner that they might penetrate the child's soul without disturbing the stillness of its budding life, without awakening it suddenly or artificially, and at the same time without letting the glimmering spark of the soul be stifled in the ashes of materialism. Fröbel found out the certain rule by which the mother may be safely and freely guided in her search for the right method of tending the human plant entrusted to her.

But what is this right method? Is everything to be prepared for the germinating infant mind, everything weighed out, all exertion spared it, and is it simply to rest in its passivity, as on its mother's breast? Yes, at the beginning of its existence the world of its surroundings must be adapted, arranged and modelled according to its needs, as its cradle and clothing are prepared for its body, because the sucking babe must first suck, *i.e.*, take in, and can as yet procure nothing for itself. But let only a few months go by, and it will begin to stretch out its hands eagerly as if to lay claim to its share of the world. Fröbel says: that the first grasping of childish hands is a sign of mental awakening. With the hands man begins to take possession of the material good things of the world, till the mind in its fashion begins also to *grasp*. It is only by appropriation that a human being can place himself in relation or connect himself with the outward world, but appropriation must be followed by action, as duties come with rights. The spontaneous action of the child, which is the beginning of future labours, begins already in the earliest months. It shows itself in the first grasping with the hands; but instead of encouraging and assisting this practice, whereby a sense of space and distance is developed, people too often hinder it by handing to the child or taking away from it the object which it grasped at with its little hands for the purpose of studying it by touch.

Constant stimulus to spontaneous action is the first principle of Fröbel's educational method. He says: "The beginning of a child's activity is the conversion of the outward into the inward;"—*i.e.*, taking in outward things as impressions—"In order afterwards to make the inward again outward;"—or in other words, to work up into ideas and thoughts, the impressions taken in, and give them out again in words and actions. In his "Sunday papers" he says: "Taking in and *living out* is a fundamental necessity of child-nature, as indeed of humanity in general. The earthly destination of mankind is, by careful assimilation of the outer world, by the forming of his nature, by the expression of his inner

life outside himself, and by careful comparison of this inner life with outward life, to attain to the knowledge of their oneness, to the knowledge of what life consists in, and to a faithful *living up* to its demands."

But suppose the right kind of surrounding to have been prepared for a child, so that it is able to take in images of beauty, truth, and morality, how is it to "*live out*" that which it has taken in? How is it to become spontaneously active? In what form is it to express its individual nature? It must live out the self, the inner being, which nature has bestowed on it, in that manner, in that form, which its childish instinct prescribes to it, viz., in play.

Play is free activity, engendered by happiness and well-being. To develop itself is happiness and well-being to a child, so long as the process is in accordance with nature; in order that it may develop itself the child plays in happy unconsciousness—for it knows nothing of the object of its activity. "Play is the first poetry of the child," says J. Paul, but play means also its *first deeds*, which are the expression of human nature, of human life. It is the preparatory exercise for this life. The child begins its existence, after the first months of mere *taking in*, by handling, producing and transforming: for to transform the world is the business of humanity.

When a child of but a few months old applies its whole strength to thumping on the table with some object or other, or to flinging it over and over again on the ground, or from its mother's arms opens and shuts the door, &c., it is exercising its young forces, and it derives pleasure from so doing—it may be said to be playing—though as yet without conscious end and without manifestation of its individual nature. When at a somewhat later age, while playing with its doll it imitates all that happens to itself, the way in which it is washed, or dressed, &c., or whatever it sees going on in the kitchen, in the workshop, in the garden, in the street, the instinct of imitation is developing its ideas, and stimulating it to ever new dramatic representations from the life of grown people, and the young *mind* is now exercising its forces. But this activity is still so to say *universal*, in so far as the child only gives back universal

impressions made on it, without its individual stamps standing out distinctly—though at the same time difference of disposition may already distinguish the boy from the girl, the sanguine temperament from the phlegmatic, and various features show individuality of character. It is only specially-gifted children and artistic or scientific geniuses of the future whose individual endowments are often strongly pronounced at the earliest age, even though all musical composers do not, like the little Mozart, compose sonatas at six years old.

Doing and handling alone are not enough to cause the individuality of a child, the kernel of its personality, the *Divine thought* in it to blossom forth—for this, actual production and creation are necessary. It is in the works of its hands that the signs must be sought which will point to the special vocation it is destined for.

The degree of practical skill of which little child-hands are capable, is shown by many an industry in which child labour is *misused*, for it is employed like a machine, always in one direction only. But the child's mind can only *produce* in the joyousness of play, with the stimulus of a desired end to be attained, of an awakened sense of the beautiful to be satisfied, or contentment of one kind or another, to be reached as the result of its endeavours. With such an aim the healthy child will spare itself no trouble, no exertion—indeed, without any definite aim it delights in exhausting itself with activity; its nature impels it to do so, for it is created for labour. But it must also become *artist*, *i.e.*, it must originate within the limits of its own small powers, if the flower of its individuality is to unfold. For this purpose the ordinary, imitative, aimless play is not sufficient; its efforts require the guiding and determining of suitable materials.

How eagerly do children long and beg for the participation of their elders in their play—for their guidance and direction; with what zeal do they collect all available materials to enable them to carry out their little ideas. But grown-up people, when they do join in the amusements of children, understand but imperfectly how to be wise leaders, and the materials at hand are seldom suitable. Chance-found material is generally



too rough to be worked upon ; and finished objects leave nothing over to be done. It has often been remarked that childish fancy prefers an unfinished article to a finished one, a bit of wood to a doll, because it can do something more to it ; and it is sufficiently evident that the continually increasing wealth and perfection of toys only serve to produce dulness in children, or destructiveness as the only form of activity left to them, or, at any rate, satiety, weariness, and a fatal love of distraction which causes a constant craving for change, while, amid all this superfluity of diversion, the inactivity of the powers makes any real satisfaction an impossibility.

Fröbel, when a little boy, tried once very hard with the material that he had collected—stones, boards, and splints—to build a model of the Gothic church of his village, but, after long fruitless struggles, he threw up his work in childish rage. This incident, however, gave birth to the later thought that children have need of prepared materials and guidance, even for the exercises they carry on in play, in order that the real meaning and object of play may be fulfilled. His own childish games in his father's garden were the foundation of his "means of employment during the first childhood," which are applied in his Kindergarten.

The purpose of the playthings, which he has devised, is to facilitate from the very first months the perception of outward objects ; by the simplicity, the method, and above all, the fitness of the things set before the child, to enable it the more easily to take in form, size, number, colour, sound, &c., and by their definiteness, serial order, and connection, to produce clear and distinct impressions which shall correspond to the first budding powers of comprehension. They serve, also, to assist the development of the senses and organs in the easiest manner, viz., through the own action of the child, so that it may be rendered capable of *living out* its inner self in accordance with its individual endowments, and of recognizing itself in its works, as works of art reflect the soul of the artist.

Through Fröbel the childish instinct of play has been converted into conscious action. He perceived the end which nature intended to reach by its means ; saw the analogy

between the process of development in early childhood and the evolutionary development of humanity, and was able, by a penetrating glance at the relations of these two processes to one another, to discover the true method for the satisfaction of the impulse of culture which is innate in man, and through which he has been led to the development of himself and his world.

It has been well said: "Genius brings with it its own path, the gifted nature reaches its goal." Providence, it is true, allows those chosen by it for great tasks to select for themselves the means of their fulfilment; but who can say how much labour, how many fruitless struggles, how many tears of despair might have been saved them? Or how much greater their services, how much wider their hearts might have been? Many, no doubt, would say that it is just these tears, and struggles, and agonies of despair, which develop genius or character;—and certainly a man has always to thank his own endeavours which developed his faculties, for his greatness. But the point in question is to direct these exertions to the right end and enable them to reach it, and, above all, to recognize endowments betimes. If a person gifted with a fine voice does not sing, he or she cannot become a singer; and if Thorwaldsen and Humboldt, like Casper Hauser, had been confined for fifteen years in a dark cellar where they could see and hear and do nothing, their genius would never have unfolded itself. But who could count the fast-bound gifts and powers which fall like unripe fruit from the tree of humanity, because no school was at hand for their development, because the soul was not loosed from its darkness? The number of geniuses will not be less because their crowns of thorns are exchanged for crowns of roses, but, on the contrary, will multiply beyond all power of calculation when the faculties have room given them for joyous work and effort, and when, through wise guidance, the vocation of the individual is made plain to him when still a child, and the shortest way to its fulfilment pointed out.

All Sysiphus labour should be spared, especially in childhood, which should be, before all things, a time of happiness; and the way to make it so is by encouraging natural activity, by setting free the imprisoned forces, and by enabling children to live in

accordance with their needs, to collect experiences, and to learn for themselves without school discipline. The creative spirit must be allowed to work in them, that thus the rising generation may be saved from the demon of excitement-seeking, which is ruining morality in our days. Action, in the form of play, must supply the elements of all knowledge and practice, so that unity and connection may pervade the whole culture. The child should come to school ready equipped with all the fundamental conditions necessary for true learning; and these are: to be able to see with one's own eyes; to hear with one's own ears; to possess the power of observing and attending; to have a thirst for knowledge; to be able rightly to perceive and distinguish the different surrounding objects, and to be able, through construction in childish fashion, to give outward expression to the inward self.

Morality and virtue must be learnt through doing and practising: words alone will never teach them. It is only by action that the will is strengthened and the capacity for great and good deeds ripened. And, for this purpose, children will seldom find so fit a field as the Kindergarten presents to them.

No age ever called for such a throng of action as does ours! The industrial works of our day are gigantic as the pyramids of Egypt; but, instead of centuries, like the latter, they require only days for their completion, and the outward world is being reconstructed with astounding rapidity.

But all the slower, alas, does the moral reconstruction go forward! What force shall be mighty enough to rival, in this field, the wonders of industry? Is there a higher force than love, which, in its divine nature, created the world? And what love is more powerful than that of the mother? The Divine spark of love in the human breast never burns with a purer and a holier fire than on the sacrificial altar of the mother's heart, which the ashes of a ruined world would not suffice to quench. Shall not this force, then, be mighty enough to contribute to the purifying and sanctifying of human society in an age when a new phoenix is striving to rise from the ashes of centuries?

It is not enough, that saving ideas should be carried about

in the world; there must also be the necessary devotion, the good-will, the endurance, the power of self-sacrifice, to carry them out. The *male* genius of humanity begets the ideas of which each century has need; the *female* genius has to work them out.

The genius of mankind is two-sexed, but a long period has gone by during which the world has received its stamp from the male half only, and the result is that many fields are barren, large tracts parched and arid. The dews of emotion and love can alone refructify them. A cry is going up on all sides calling to the slumbering second genius of humanity to awake, and appealing to the "*love force*" of woman for redeeming works. The cry of the children calls to the hearts of mothers that here is the material out of which they may build up a new generation which shall impart the spirit of moral greatness and dignity to the beautified outward world, so that the body may not remain without a soul. A new key has been found to unlock the nature of the child, a new alphabet is ready wherewith to decipher its secrets—will not the mothers of our day snatch gladly at this key, and eagerly study this new book for mothers? And will not the young women too, who are not yet mothers, joyfully undertake the sacred office of educators of childhood to which Fröbel calls them?

## CHAPTER VI.

## FRÖBEL'S METHOD, AND WHAT IS NEW IN IT.

WE have attempted so far to draw out more fully and to make universally comprehensible the following general ideas of Fröbel's.

1. The destiny of a child is, to be the child of nature, the child of humanity, and the child of God.

Or: the human being as a product of the earth belongs to the material physical world, and is of necessity subject to the laws of this world; as a personality he comes out of the range of these laws and stands as man on the higher ground of self-knowledge and freedom; and lastly, through right development and a life in harmony with it, he attains to the still higher spiritual community of universal humanity in which the divine spark of the human soul begins to shine, and he enters into relation with the world outside the limits of earth, and with the source of all things.

2. In the utterances of the child, which are the mirror of its nature, we recognize on a small scale the development of humanity in its infancy.

Or in other words, the individual will always reflect the characteristics of the race, as may be proved by the analogy between the historical epochs in the world's progress, and the universal stages in the life of childhood.

3. The education of children requires: consideration of human nature in general, which changes with the progressive development of the race; consideration of the age in which they are living; of the personality of each individual character; and lastly of the *law of development*, which as regards the

spiritual nature is "a higher outcome of the general law of development of the universe."

4. The first period of childhood—as being the most important with regard to human development in general—is not yet sufficiently considered and cared for; the first needs of the soul are almost entirely disregarded; Fröbel offers the means by which the female sex may be more adequately prepared for its vocation as the first educators of childhood.

These fundamental ideas must be accepted before Fröbel's method and means of education can be understood and appreciated in their full significance. In their general acceptance these ideas have undoubtedly been more or less expressed in different ages and at different times, and every thoughtful educationalist has more or less recognized them. But in the relation which Fröbel gives them, and the application discovered for them by him, they are new.

An idea is never realized by one human mind, or even by one generation; it is part of the scheme of the great Ruler who sends these ideas to the earth, these sparks from the eternal altar of truth, that they should go on ripening for centuries before they are allowed to bear fruit. Every new truth, which has become a reality, has had behind it a host of zealous spirits, who have been compelled to fight for it and force open a way, may be at the peril of their lives, before it could make its entry into the region of reality. And often it happens that the man or woman in whose mind the light of a new truth first kindled remains for ever unknown.

Before a new idea assumes an established form it must have been thought out again and again by the various successors of its first pioneer, each one of whom will have something to contribute to what has been already conceded—not merely an amendment here or there, but a new thought which will alter, or give a fresh basis to the entire scheme. And this is essentially the work of genius—the fire in which every spark of truth is kindled. If a new thought is to be fused into any scheme that has been already ripening for some time, the whole ground which has been gone over and gained from the birth of the scheme down to its present stage must be contemplated anew

from an independent stand-point. Every man of science who contributes something new to his special branch must be well up in all that has been done before his time; he must reckon up again the whole sum of results already gained if he has received a fresh amount to be added to it. And what but the intuitive power of genius would be equal to such a task?

In the field of education the same truth holds good: Fröbel's idea of "human education conducted according to an infallible method" had been groped after, worked at, nourished and fostered for centuries by minds kindred to his own, until at last it was able to be formulated and expressed with some sort of clearness.

The pith of the educational theory in question may be summed up in few words, as follows:—there must be a methodical and systematic plan, according to which every healthily born human being (relatively speaking!) can be in such manner surrounded and guided that his inborn faculties and powers may be sure of complete development.

Only a plan of this sort is worthy the name of an educational method.

Before the theory in question, together with what Fröbel has done towards carrying it out, can be clearly expounded, it is necessary to come to an understanding as to what is meant by method, and to distinguish rightly between an educational and instructional method.

There are many people who while allowing that *instruction* should be imparted methodically to children at quite an early age, nevertheless think it foolish and unpractical to dream of *educating* a child according to a method from the beginning of its existence.

They think that free spontaneous development, the growth of individuality, would be hindered thereby.

The idea of method in its general signification may be defined as follows: a systematic plan, that is to say a plan which could not be any other than what it is, and such as after repeated experiences it has become established, for reaching any given end in the easiest and best possible way. Or else: the following of definite rules to attain an object in view.

Whatever form the definition may take the pith of it will always be the same.\*

In all and everything that has to be accomplished there must be one way which leads more directly than any other to the wished-for goal. When once this most direct way to any given end has been established, each one has but to follow it : that is to say, to apply certain fixed rules which have resulted from experience; and it is in this application of fixed rules that method consists. This is true of all work without exception—the least as well as the greatest.

No art, not even that of cooking, can be carried on without such a system of rules. Suppose a cook, for instance, were to put together the ingredients of her dough in an arbitrary manner, without regard to weight, and to bake them without first mixing and stirring them, the bread would not turn out well. And what applies to industrial processes applies equally to artistic and mental work. Poetry cannot dispense with metre and the laws of versification; musical compositions must be based on the laws of harmony.

Even when people write poetry without any knowledge of metrical rules, they nevertheless unconsciously apply these rules; their compositions could not be called poetry if a definite plan of syllables did not produce rhythm. In the same way, people gifted with musical talent do not need to have learnt the laws of harmony, in order to apply them in musical improvising. But

\* It is impossible to demonstrate what is new in Fröbel's system except in connection with what is already known, for what is special in any idea can only be seen in relation to what is general in it. We must first, therefore, clearly establish the general side of this educational theory, that in which Fröbel's ideas, too, are rooted, in order that we may be at one with our readers concerning the premises.

The public has, hitherto, chiefly concerned itself with the outward aspect of the Kindergarten system, both as regards theory and practice, has illustrated the substance of the method, while the kernel, the reason of it, has chiefly remained in the back-ground and has not been universally accessible. So long as this is the case the interest of the thinking public, and especially of those who are strangers to the science of education, will be little awakened in the system, and the danger of its being reduced to a mechanical process will continually increase. Not till the principles on which the system is grounded are fully understood will this danger be removed and the system universally taken up.



without that unconscious application, only discordance would be the result, and never a complete tune.

This unconscious and intuitive application of every kind of laws proves that the foundation of all systems lies in human nature itself—is an innate faculty. If this were not the case no amount of experience would enable man to comprehend the laws outside himself, either in nature or in human work.

The imparting of knowledge, according to some such a plan of laws, is called methodical instruction. Nothing can be called real instruction which does not proceed according to a method, and no one will have a word to say against instruction being methodical. Every one knows that a language cannot be thoroughly learnt without a grammar, which sets before the pupil the rules or laws of the language.

Instruction, or teaching, as such, has to do with the powers of apprehension, the understanding of the pupil, and, in addition to the imparting of positive knowledge, aims at exercising and developing the power of thought. The laws of instructional methods must therefore correspond to the laws of human thought, or the subject taught could never be grasped by the pupil.

The next question, therefore, is, in what do these laws of human thought consist?

Let us be permitted to give here a few rapid indications which are necessary to the clear exposition of our subject. A psychological treatment of it would be out of place. These indications, moreover, will not be given in accordance with the numerous definitions of philosophical authorities, but only in the sense in which inward and outward observation brings them to the notice of every sound human intellect, and in which they lie at the bottom of Fröbel's views.

What, then, is the process of the human mind in reflection? The *systematic* process, as it is the same for all minds.

Every thought must relate to something that we know, and first of all to visible objects; we must have an *object* of thought. This object of thought must not only be taken in by the senses as a whole, so that a general idea of it is gained, as of a foreign plant that has been seen superficially

in a picture, without the details of leaves, blossoms, stamens, &c. It must be observed and studied in all its parts and details. If we want to acquire a thorough knowledge of a foreign plant we must compare all its properties with those of plants known to us. When the properties or qualities of different objects are all exactly the same we cannot compare them; if there is to be comparison, there must be a certain amount of difference—but difference, side-by-side with similarity. The qualities which are similar will be the universal ones, which everything possesses, as form, size, colour, material, &c., for there is nothing that does not possess these qualities. The different, or contrasting qualities, will consist in variations of the universal ones of form, size, &c., as, for instance, round and square, great and little, hard and soft, &c. Such differences in properties that have a general resemblance are called opposites.

All such opposites, however, are at the same time connected and bound together. The greatest size that we can imagine to ourselves is connected with the smallest by all the different sizes that lie between; the darkest colour with the lightest by all the intermediate shades; from an angular shape one can gradually go over to a round one through a series of modifications of form; and from hard to soft through all the different gradations. Not that one and the same object can ever be both hard or soft, dark or light, great or little, but the collective qualities of all existing objects go over from their superlative on the one side to their superlative on the other, hardest to softest, darkest to lightest, and so on.

The gradations of great and little, hard and soft, &c., which lie between the opposites, are the connecting links, or, as Fröbel puts it, "the means of reconciliation of opposites" (and Fröbel's system cannot be rightly understood unless this principle, which forms the basis of it, be acknowledged). This "reconciliation" is effected through affinity of qualities. Black and white are not alike, but opposite; the darkest red, however, is in affinity with black, as the lightest red is with white, and all the different gradations of red connect together the opposites, black and white.

Now any one who has compared an unknown plant with

known ones, in all the details of its different parts—leaf, flower, fruit, &c., is in a position to pass judgment on it, and to draw a conclusion as to whether it belongs to this or that known genus of plants, and what is its species. Thus the natural process of thought is as follows: perception, observation, comparison, judgment and conclusion.

Without this series of preliminary steps no thought can be worked out, and the ruling principle is the law of the reconciliation of opposites, or the finding out the like and unlike qualities of things.

It matters not how far the thinker be conscious or unconscious of the process going on in his mind. The child is entirely unconscious of it, and therefore takes longer to reach from one stage to another. At first it receives only general impressions; then perception comes in; gradually ideas begin to shape themselves in its mind, and it then learns to compare and distinguish; but judging and concluding do not begin till the third or fourth year, and then only vaguely and dimly. Nevertheless, the same systematic process is at work as in the conscious thought of the adult.

Any system of instruction which is to be effectual must therefore take into account this law of thought (or logic); it must apply the fundamental principle of *connecting the known with the unknown by means of comparison*. This principle is, however, everlastingly sinned against, and people talk to children about things and communicate to them opinions and thoughts concerning them, of which children have no conception and can form none. And this is done even after Pestalozzi by his "*method of observation and its practical application*" has placed instruction on a true basis.

Of the manner in which Fröbel has built up on this foundation we shall speak later. We have here to deal first with *education*, to show how far it differs from *instruction*, and, whether a systematic or methodical process is applicable to it. as Fröbel considers it to be.

When Pestalozzi was endeavouring to construct his "Fundamental Method of Instruction" ("*Urform des Lehrens*") according to some definite principle, he recognized the truth that

the problem of education cannot be fully solved by any merely instructional system however much in accordance with the laws of nature. He saw that the moral forces of the human soul, feeling and will, require to be dealt with in a manner analogous to the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, that any merely instructional method is inadequate to the task, and that a training-school of another sort is needed for the moral side of cultivation—one in which the power of moral action may be acquired. While searching for some such "psychological basis" to his method he exclaimed, "I am still as the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

As a means to this end he requires an A B C of the science and a system of moral exercises, and he says: "The culture of the moral faculties rests on the same organic laws which are the foundation of our intellectual culture."

Fichte (in his "Discourses") insists on an "A B C of perception," which is to precede Pestalozzi's "A B C of observation," and speaks as follows: "The new method of education must be able to shape and determine its pupil's course of life according to fixed and infallible rules."

"There must be a definite system of rules by which always, without exception, a firm will may be produced."

The development of children into men and women must be brought under the laws of a well-considered system, which shall never fail to accomplish its end, viz., the cultivation in them of a firm and invariably right will.

This moral activity, which has to be developed in the pupil, is without doubt based on laws, which laws the agent finds out for himself by direct personal experience, and the same holds good of the voluntary development carried on later, which cannot be fruitful of good results unless based on the fundamental laws of nature.

Thus Pestalozzi and Fichte—like all thinkers on the question of education—searched for the laws of human nature, in order to apply these laws in the cultivation of human nature.

Fröbel strove to refer back all these manifold laws to one fundamental law which he called the "reconciliation of opposites" (of relative opposites).

In order to arrive at a clear and comprehensive conception, where there is plurality and variety, we seek a point of unity, in which all the different parts or laws may centre, and to which they may be referred. For the undeveloped mind of the child this is an absolute necessity. The method, which is to be the rule of his activity, must be as simple and as single as possible. This necessity will be made plain when we proceed later on to the application of Fröbel's theory in practice.

Fröbel's observations of the human soul are in accord with the general results of modern psychology, in spite of small deviations which cannot be considered important. Science has not by a long way arrived at final conclusions on this subject, and must, therefore, give its due weight to every reasonable assumption; it would be most unprofitable to drag Fröbel's system into the judgement hall of scientific schools, in order to decide how far it agreed with these schools or not. Its importance lies for the moment chiefly in its practical side. In order to preserve this part of it from becoming mechanical, and to maintain its vitality, its connection with the theoretical side must be understood and expounded more and more thoroughly. With the advance of science Fröbel's philosophy of the universe must in course of time have its proper place assigned to it, and his educational system, which is grounded on his philosophy, will be brought into the necessary connection with other scientific discoveries.

The great endeavour of modern educationalists, is to replace the artificiality and restraint in which the purely conventional educational systems of earlier times have resulted by something more corresponding to human nature. To this end it was necessary to go back to the ground motives of all education whatsoever: the laws of development of the human being. It was necessary at the same time to determine the reason of educational measures in order to elevate them into conscious, purposeful action. Former conventional systems of education worked only unconsciously, according to established custom, without any deep knowledge of human nature or fundamental relation to it.

The science of humanity was then in its infancy, and, although

it has since made great progress, the knowledge of child nature is still very meagre.

The services rendered by Rousseau, as the first pioneer of modern educational theories, and the many errors and eccentricities mixed up with his great truths, must here be assumed to be known.

Pestalozzi, who carried on the work in the same track, fixed the elements of his "Urform des Lehrens" in form, number, and words, as the fundamental conditions of human mental activity, and which can only be acquired and gained by observation.

For instance, every visible and every thinkable thing has a *form* which makes it what it is. There are things of like and things of different form, and there is a plurality of things which stands in opposition to every single thing. Through the division of things arises *number*, and the proportions and relations of things to one another. In order to express these different proportions of form and number, we have need of *words*.

Thus in these three elements we have the most primitive facts on which thought is based. In every form, every number, and every word there exist two connected or united opposites. In every form, for instance, we find the two opposites, beginning and end, right and left, upper and under, inner and outer, and so forth.

With regard to number, unity and plurality, as well as odd and even numbers, constitute opposites. Then form and number are in themselves opposites, for form has to do with the whole, number with the separate parts. But the word by which they are described reconciles these opposites by comprehending them both in one expression.

Pestalozzi has begun the work of basing instruction systematically on the most primitive facts and workings of the human mind. To carry on this work, and also to find the equally necessary basis for moral and practical culture, with which must be combined exercises for the intellectual powers before the period allotted to *instruction*, is the task that remains to be accomplished. Pestalozzi's plan and practical methods are not altogether sufficient for the first years of life.

It is a false use of language which separates education from instruction. The word education, in its full meaning of human culture, as a whole, includes instruction as a part, and comprises in itself mental, moral, and physical development; but in its narrower use it signifies, more especially, moral culture.

One of the reasons why instruction has been so much more considered and systematized than the moral side of education is, undoubtedly, that the former is in the hands of educational and school authorities who possess the mental training and capacity necessary for their vocation. No one is allowed to be a professional teacher who has not proved himself to possess a certain degree of proficiency for the task. Moral education, on the other hand, falls to the supervision of the family, as the first and natural guardians of its children, and here neither the father nor the mother, nor any of the other sharers in the work, are really fitted for it; not one of them has received a special preparation, and it depends entirely upon the higher or lower degree of general culture of the parents, and their natural capacity or non-capacity for their educational calling, how far the moral culture of the children will extend.

But over and above the preparatory training of parents and other natural guardians—which was already insisted on and striven after by Pestalozzi—moral education will only then be placed on a par with intellectual instruction when a real foundation has been given to it by the application of a fixed system of rules, such a foundation as the laws of thought afford for instruction.

The human soul is *one*, all its powers and functions have a like aim, and, therefore, feeling and willing—as factors of moral life—cannot be developed in any other way than thought. The parts which make up the whole of education must be subject to the same laws as the whole, and conversely the whole must be developed in like manner as the parts.

The moral world is concerned with two aspects of things—the good and the beautiful—while the understanding has the discovery of truth for its object.

Both the good and the beautiful have their roots in the heart or the feelings, and belong thus to the inner part of man—to

his spiritual world. The power and habit of feeling rightly and beautifully constitute moral inclination, which influences the will, but does not yet necessarily lead it to action.

In its connection with the outer world morality appears in the form of action. Through action, or the carrying out of the good that is willed, the character is formed. The practice of the beautiful, on the other hand, leads to art and artistic creation.

Thus education, in its essentially moral aspect, has to do with the cultivation of the feelings and the will. It need hardly be said that the element of instruction cannot be altogether dispensed with, even in this department, any more than the cultivation of the intellect can be carried on without a certain amount of moral development. In earliest childhood the three different natures of the human being are fused in one and must be dealt with accordingly.

The good and the beautiful, like all other qualities, are known through their opposites. Only by contrast with the *not* good, or bad, the *not* beautiful, or ugly, are the good and the beautiful apprehended by our consciousness.

As mental *conceptions*, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, the true and the untrue, are irreconcilable (absolute) opposites. Pure thought, however, has to deal with the absolute. In all the manifestations of the actual world everything that exists is only relatively good and bad, ugly and beautiful, true and untrue; all opposites exist here only relatively. No human being is perfectly good or perfectly bad, just as nobody is completely developed or completely undeveloped. So, too, no work of art is in an absolute sense perfectly beautiful, or perfectly ugly—whether as a whole or in its parts.

As, therefore, in all and everything belonging to the human world opposites are found existing together, so, also, do they pass over into one another and are “reconciled.” Thus everything is connected together, and constitutes an immense chain of different members.

We do not mean to say that already in the actual world all opposites are reconciled, all discords solved, and the great world-harmony complete; but it is going on to completion. This is the aim and end of all movement, all life, all endeavour, and an



end which is only fully attainable to human beings by the cessation of all self-seeking (as in Christ), the absorption of all individuals into humanity; and this by means of the highest individual development and self-existence; not by transforming the individual into the universal.

In the most fundamental bases of good and evil we find again two new opposites.

In whatever form evil manifests itself, it is always at bottom self-seeking of some sort; or else it is error or madness. Ambition, pride, avarice, envy, dishonesty, murder, hatred, &c., may always be traced back to self-seeking, even though it be disguised in the form of extravagant affection for others, or for one other. So, too, what we call diabolical is, in reality, self-seeking.

And whatever shape good may take it must be essentially the expression of love to others. A solitary individual in no way connected with fellow-creatures would have as little opportunity for good as for evil.

All the impulses and passions of a human being have for their object the procuration of personal happiness and well-being and the avoidance of personal annoyance. And as long as the happiness and well-being of others is not disturbed, nor the individual himself injured, there is nothing to be said. The conflict between good and evil begins when the happiness of an individual is procured at the cost of others or of the community.

True goodness consists, with rare exceptions, in preferring the welfare of the many or of the whole of human society, to personal, egotistical advantage; in striving after an ideal which, without self-sacrificing love, would be unthinkable. Love towards God, moreover, compels love towards mankind.

The moral battle-field is always between the two extremities of personal and universal interest, and the reconciliation of the two is the result aimed at. There also where the battle goes on in the inner world of the human soul it is a question of personal against general interest, or of the opposition between the sensual and the spiritual natures of the individual. The object of man's earthly existence is to reconcile the rights of personality, self-preservation and independence with the duties of necessary devotion and self-sacrifice to society. The personal

services rendered to the *whole*, in any circle of life, determine the worth of the individual to society, and moral greatness consists in the love which, going out beyond the personal, seeks to embrace the whole of God's world—and therewith God himself. For God has herein placed the destiny of man, viz., to expand from the circle of individual existence, through all intermediate circles, to the great circle of humanity.

In the world of the beautiful we meet with the same law, viz., "the reconciliation of opposites."

What do we mean by the beautiful? That which is harmonious or rhythmical. Harmony is the co-operation of all the parts of a whole towards the object of the whole. If the innermost nature of beauty baffles our attempts at full definition, harmony is, nevertheless, its fundamental condition.

But a necessary condition of harmony is the balance of parts tending in opposite directions.

Beauty of form (plastic art) depends on the opposites, height and breadth, for instance, being rightly proportioned or balanced; on the contrasting horizontal and perpendicular lines being kept in balance by their connecting lines. In the circle we have the perfect balance of all opposite parts, and the circular line is, therefore, the line of beauty. In architecture the triangle is the fundamental shape—that is to say, two lines starting from one point and running in opposite directions are connected together by a third line. And so forth.

Beauty in the world of colour is the harmonious blending together of the opposites, light and shade, by means of the scale of colour—this at least is the primary condition. The mixing of colours, too, consists in the right fusion of the elementary colours—red, blue, yellow, which in themselves form opposites.

In the world of sound beauty is in like manner conditioned by the harmony of single tones amongst each other. The basis of musical harmony is the simple chord, i.e., the opposites, which the keynote and the fifth constitute, are reconciled by the third.

In poetry rhythm is obtained by the regular connection of long and short syllables. And so forth.

The ugly, the imperfect, in all arts, is on the other hand the inharmonious—or the result of want of proportion and correspondence in opposites—or the absence of transitions to connect them together.

And we come again across these same laws, which we have summed up as the basis of thought, in the moral world also: as well in that side of it which is known as “the good” (ethics), as in that which is called “the beautiful” (æsthetics).

Whether this universal principle (*Welt gesetz*—*world law*, as Fröbel calls it) be formulated as “the reconciliation of opposites” or in any other way, is here, as has been already said, of little importance. The most comprehensive formula would perhaps be *law of balance*.

Science expresses itself very differently in this matter. Newton calls the law in question the “law of gravitation” (the connection of attraction and repulsion). Naturalists designate it as the law of “universal exchange of matter” (giving out and taking in, connected by assimilation), &c.

This law, in which Fröbel sees the foundation of all development, and, therefore, also of human development—it is his desire to establish and apply as the “universal law of education.”

It is with the application of the law, which will be demonstrated in the practices of his Kindergarten method, that we are chiefly concerned here, but in order to a clear understanding of this the foregoing introduction was indispensable.

Not till one all-pervading principle of development, which shall comprise in itself every variety of law, has been discovered and applied to practical education in its minutest detail will there be anything approaching to a veritable and complete method.

It remains, therefore, now to prove that this principle of Fröbel's is identical in the spiritual and material world, and, if this be established, the connection or unity of all law will follow of itself.

Fröbel has over and over again told us how deeply his whole development was influenced by the fact that from his earliest childhood he was out of harmony with his immediate surroundings. The early death of his mother, the unloving treatment

of his step-mother, and the small amount of attention and sympathy bestowed on him by his father, partly owing to the professional duties of the latter, which left him little time, and partly to an uncommunicative and somewhat stern nature, deprived the child of fostering love in the morning of his life, and initiated him early into the sorrows of existence.

The yearning of his soul for love, the thirst of his mind for knowledge, were never really satisfied, and he was for ever finding himself driven back anew on the inmost depths of his nature, left to stand by himself alone. Up to the years of early manhood the gulf between his outer surroundings and his inner world became greater and greater, and his young spirit suffered deeply in consequence.

The pain that he experienced incited him to search out the cause of it, and this he found in the sharp contrast that existed between his inner and his outer world.

This discovery of "opposites," this want of the concord and harmony that his whole soul was unconsciously yearning after, forms the first great and lasting impression of his life.

The feelings which met with no response in the world of humanity, all the warmth and ardour of his soul, now turned to the world of nature. In the contemplation of this world, in devotion to its invisible spirit, in which he soon learnt to recognize the Divine Spirit, he found the consolation, and also in part the instruction which had been denied him by his human surroundings.

Already as a boy he would lose himself in profound meditation on the laws of the universe, on the cause of organic life in nature.

"From star-shaped blossoms," he says, "I first learnt to understand the law of all formation, and it is no other than the 'reconciliation of opposites.'"

For instance: Each of the petals which form the corolla round the calyx of the flower has another petal opposite it, and between these opposite petals there are others which connect them together.

"A humble little flower taught me dimly to suspect the

secrets of existence, the mysterious laws of development, which I afterwards learnt clearly," so writes Fröbel.

Continuing his observations, he perceived that every single petal is in itself a whole leaf, or a whole, but at the same time only a part of the whole of the floral star. Thus a whole and a part at the same time, or a *glied ganzes*, as Fröbel expresses it. Then again, the flower is a whole in itself, but also only a part of the whole plant. The plant is a whole, and at the same time a part of the plant family to which it belongs, and this again is a part of the genus.

In such manner did the child Fröbel perceive the membership in all natural objects, and he remarked at the same time how one part is always sub-related or super-related or co-related to another; the flower is super-related to the root, the root is sub-related to the flower, the petals are co-related to each other.

These divisions into members, which are found in all organic and systematic formations, are now taught to children at school by means of books; it is a question, however, whether in this way they can grasp them as easily and understand them as clearly as did the child Fröbel, through his own observation. The first apprehension of things comes long before school instruction, and what is taught with words must be based on that which has been taken in through the senses. If this first apprehension through observation is wanting, the foundation for the understanding of what is *taught* will also be wanting.

In the progressive course of his childish observations, Fröbel further remarked that it is not only in individual organisms that the different parts, by means of connecting transitions (or the reconciliation of opposites) make up the harmony of the whole, but that also between all and the most different organisms there are everywhere to be found like points of transition, which connect together the most opposite things by a series of intermediate points growing more and more similar. Thus through a countless series of intermediate plants he saw grasses connected with trees.

The connection in the vegetable kingdom became apparent to him through the fact that all plants, how great soever their

differences, have something in common; all have roots, stems, leaves, crowns, stamens, &c., the characteristics of the vegetable world. Thus unity in spite of infinite variety.

But it was not in the vegetable world alone that organic life manifested itself to him as the result of systematic working, of division into parts, of a series of events, of sub and super ordination, of connection through transitions, of variety in similarity, in short, of harmony and concord accomplished through the reconciliation of opposites; he saw the self-same truth pervading other kingdoms of nature. In the organism of animal bodies, indeed, in the whole animal kingdom, he found his law at work again.

As the sap of plants ascends and descends from the root to the crown, and conversely, and through this movement connects together the opposite forces, expansion and contraction through which the leaf-buds are formed in the stem, so is the circulation of blood in the animal body. The blood streams out from the heart, and back to it again by opposite movements; the lungs expand and contract together in the process of breathing, &c. As the corresponding petals of a flower stand opposite one another, so do the limbs of animal bodies; the corresponding feet, hands, ears, or eyes, are placed opposite to one another. Fröbel calls this *entgegengesetztgleiche* (like things set opposite to each other), and he finds analogous occurrences in the spiritual world.

And further, he perceived that not only throughout each of the three kingdoms of nature—the inorganic mineral kingdom not excepted—there exist common characteristics by which the members of the separate kingdoms are united, but that these three kingdoms, taken as wholes, have points of similarity through which they pass over into one another, and are connected together. He saw that the vegetable world is fed by the mineral world, which is contained both in the bosom of the earth and in the atmosphere; that the vegetable and mineral worlds together feed the animal world, which also feeds upon itself; and that man, by the food he eats, by the air he breathes in, &c., lives on all the three kingdoms of nature, and is thus united and connected with them.

Here, too, in the chemical process of fusion, which is known as "interchange of matter," he found his favourite law again. For this process of interchange goes on as follows:—Every organism takes or sucks in nourishment, air, &c., and then gives out again part of what it has taken in. Here, therefore, we have the opposites, *taking in and giving out*. The reconciliation of these opposites is accomplished by appropriation or assimilation, for every organic body converts a portion of what it has taken in in the shape of food, air, &c., into flesh and blood; and thus there is a constant mutual exchange of substance going on between all organisms. And this process of exchange, by which everything that exists is connected together organically and materially, is not thinkable without the adjusting of opposites, or, as Fröbel calls it, "the reconciliation of opposites."

But this was not all. Besides the continuous connection, the *unity* which he discovered to exist in everything on earth, from the lowest to the highest, from the nearest object to the most distant, the same truth was borne in upon him concerning the solar system. There was not the tiniest herb on earth that did not drink in and feed on the sunlight. Without the continuous action of the sun's rays on all that exists on earth, all life must perish; the earth would be a dead body without the light and warmth of the sun. And as everything on our earth is kept alive by the action of the sun, so is it with all the heavenly bodies on which the sun shines, every single planet of our solar system.

And further still, our solar system itself is not isolated, alone and unconnected with the other solar systems of the universe. Arguing from the known (or that which was nearest to him) to the unknown (or that which was furthest), from the visible to the invisible, Fröbel concluded that the law of membership, which he had found to exist in the least as well as the greatest organisms, and in all organisms on the earth, must in a like or analogous manner pervade the whole universe.

The works of a Creator must be in connection one with another, and all, without exception, bear the stamp of their Creator. Not necessarily in exactly the same degree, but in gradations from lowest to highest, and not in outward appear-

ance either, but by one and the same system of law, according to which each and all are developed, must this stamp of God show itself.

"There is but one fundamental law of the universe out of which all other laws in the world of outward phenomena spring." Thus did A. von Humboldt also express the truth which is the fundamental thought on which Fröbel's method of observation rests.\*

Fröbel has certainly about as good a right to argue from the visible and known things of earth to the invisible unknown things of the universe, as has the naturalist from a given vertebræ to undertake to construct the whole organism of an animal.

In a letter to his elder brother,† written in his twenty-fifth year, Fröbel sketches out a plan for his future life. A passage in this letter, alluding to his childhood and early youth, plainly shows how from his childhood up he busied himself with the attempt to reconcile the workings of nature with his own inner world, and to find the points of unity between the two. To understand the connection of all phenomena of the outward world, and the way in which these harmonized with the spiritual world, was his constant endeavour.

Speaking of things in Nature, he says:—"I felt that something simple informed them all, that they all had their origin from something which was *one*, the same, identical; that they must all unite together in some one point; for they all existed collectively in Nature! My own inner world was inspired by one thought, one idea—the suspicion of something higher in man than humanity, of a higher end than this life. By means of this continual searching and finding in the depths of my inner being, this constant going down into self, I soon discovered that a better knowledge of myself helped me better to understand the outer world. I was driven to explore my little inner world, that through it I might learn to know the great outer world surrounding me. I learnt from the teacher experience,

\* Fröbel searched after and discovered the "unity of all development," a theory which is universally occupying modern scientific enquiry.

† In vol. I. of "*Fröbel's Schriften*," edited by W. Lange.



without suspecting, without even knowing clearly, what I was learning. In this way I arrived at an ideal knowledge of myself, of the world, and of humanity, such as few men possess in youth. For every fresh discovery that I made in the outward world I felt always compelled to find a corresponding point in myself, to which I could fasten it," &c.

Fröbel was then seeking for what he later designated by the expression *Lebenseinigung* (unity of life).

In the life of the human soul he saw a repetition of the continual adjustment of opposites, which went on in the life of nature. As the opposites of day and night were connected by twilight, of summer and winter by spring and autumn, so in the human soul do the day and night of conscious and unconscious life, the light and darkness of good and evil, alternate with one another. So, too, activity and rest, happiness and sorrow, &c.

As the buds which burst open in the spring have developed out of the invisible germ hidden under the hard crust of winter, so do the opposites, life and death, alternate. And these are only seemingly irreconcilable opposites. All earthly life contains within itself the germ of death (of future change), all death carries new life within it.

"How can any one," Fröbel exclaims, "believe in real death, in annihilation? Nothing dies; everything only becomes changed in order to pass into a new and higher life. This is true of every little herb, for its essential inherent qualities are indestructible. Everything retains in each of its parts the individual character assigned to it, i.e., its essence, to all eternity. How, then, should the most marked characteristic of a human being, the consciousness of his own individual personality, be lost, even though he should pass through millions of new existences? What you people call death is nowhere to be found in creation, but only expansion, life ascending higher and higher, always nearer to God. If you only knew how to read the book of nature rightly you would find everywhere in it the confirmation of the revelation of the soul's immortality. Throughout the whole of nature there is nothing but continually repeated resurrection! . . . The universal and the individual

are opposites, which presuppose one another. Without individual human beings there would be no humanity, and without humanity there would be no individuals. The race only continues because the personal units continue. Humanity comprises not only mankind of to-day, but mankind of the past and of the future; all the human beings that have ever existed on earth make up humanity, and humanity presupposes conscious existence, both general and personal."

The above quotations from Fröbel's own words will be sufficient proof that his theory of the unity of life (*Lebenseinigung*) did not, as has been asserted, rest on a pantheistic conception of the universe. The immense unbroken whole of the universe comprises, according to him, God, nature, and man, as an inseparably connected whole, though not as finished and at rest, but on the contrary, in a state of eternal "becoming"—of having become and being about to become, at the same time. He had always in view the progressive development of all things—that is to say, the continual movement of forces; he saw nowhere repose—or at any rate only passing repose—never lasting completion, for every apparently finished form of development was always succeeded by a new one.

In his "*Menschen-Erziehung*" (Human Education) [see Introduction], he says, for instance: "The theory which regards development as capable of standing still and being finished, or only repeating itself in greater universality, is, beyond all expression, a degrading one, &c. . . . Neither man nor mankind should be regarded as an already finished, perfected, stereotyped being; but as everlastingly growing, developing, living; moving onwards to the goal which is hidden in eternity. . . . Man, although in the closest connection with God and nature, stands, nevertheless, as a person in the relation of an opposite to nature (or plurality) and to God (or unity). (Nature and God are opposites in their character of plurality and unity.) Man (as humanity) is the representative of the law of reconciliation, for he stands in the universe as the connecting link between God and creation." (For unconscious existence and absolute conscious existence are connected by personal, or limited conscious existence.)

"As the branch is a member of the tree, and at the same time a whole, so is the individual man a member of humanity, and therefore a member of a whole. But each one is a member in an entirely special, individual, personal manner; the destiny of humanity—that is 'to be a child of God'—manifests itself differently in each individual.

"One and the same law rules throughout everything, but expresses itself outwardly (in the physical world), and inwardly (in the spiritual world), in endless different forms."

"At the bottom of this all-pervading law there must, of necessity, lie an all-working unity, conscious of its existence, and therefore existing eternally."

"This unity is God."

"God manifests himself as *life* in nature, in the universe; as *love* in humanity; and as *light* (wisdom). He makes himself known to the soul. . . . As life, love, and light does the nature of man also manifest itself."

"As the child of nature, man is an imprisoned, fettered being, without self-mastery, under the dominion of his passions. As the child of God he becomes a free agent, destined to self-mastery, of his own free will a hearing, conforming spiritual being. As the child of humanity, he is a being struggling out of his fettered condition into freedom, out of isolation into union, yearning for love and existing to find it.

"The unity in the nature of all things is the in-dwelling spirit of their Creator, 'the mind of God,' which expresses itself as law." . . . The destiny of man as a child of God and of nature is to represent the being of God and of nature: as the destiny of a child, as the member of a family, is to represent the nature of the family, its mental and spiritual capabilities, so the vocation of man, as a member of humanity, is to represent and to cultivate the nature, the powers, and faculties of humanity.

Fröbel defines life, in whatever form it may express itself, as progressive development from lower to higher grades, from unconscious existence to a conscious existence, which ascends higher and higher till it reaches the consciousness of God.

But all development is movement. It ascends from beneath

to above, from lesser to greater, from the germ to its completion. It is also, at the same time, a constant means of reconciliation of opposites, and itself a product of that universal law, which we have just acknowledged as the law of human thought, the law of moral life, and the law of the physical or organic world.

Movement, whether free or compulsory movement, which has an object, is activity.

From which it follows that the law of the reconciliation of opposites is also the law of all activity, of all human action, and all human development which is based on activity and is the result of it.

And how could it be otherwise?

Human beings belong, on their physical side also, to nature; the whole process of their physical life is an interchange with the products of nature; therefore man, as a physical being, is subject to the laws of nature. But the soul is inseparable from the body, and can only express itself and act through the bodily organs. It follows, therefore, that the soul cannot be subject to conditions opposed to the bodily ones, but must obey laws analogous to those which govern the other organisms of the universe, though of a higher order than the laws of unconscious life.

Every utterance or manifestation of the human spirit necessitates action of the senses; and we know that such action is based on law, and, moreover, on the same law which governs all action in the universe: the reconciliation, connection, or adjustment of opposites.

If, then, the full development of human nature rests on this universal law of activity there can be no other rule for the guidance of this development in childhood and youth, or, in one word, for education. Nature follows this law in her dealings with children, and if education is to be in accordance with nature it must do the same; and then only, when this fundamental principle is recognized and followed, and applied in the development of human nature, with full understanding of its aim and object, will education be raised to the level of art or science.

Fröbel is the first person who has hitherto fully recognized

this principle and rendered its application possible, and his educational method is nothing more or less than constant obedience to it at every stage of the pupil's development. Which means to say that all the free spontaneous activity of children is systematically regulated in the same manner as the whole natural world unconsciously is, and as the world of human nature would always be also were it not for the disturbing element of consciousness which awakens the personal will, and incites it to arbitrary action (*i.e.*, free choice without regard to right or wrong), thus coming in contact with the laws of nature and hindering the direct accomplishment of her purpose.

But there can be no real freedom in human action, unless it follows in the path, recognizes the limits, and subjects itself to the necessity of Law. The treatment of matter, substances, the physical in short, which is the point of departure of all human thought and action, can only accomplish the desired end when it is carried on according to systematic rules. Arbitrary capricious action never reaches its end, or only by accident.

Thus, then, Fröbel's system consists in regulating the natural spontaneous activity of the child according to its own inherent law, in order that the purpose of nature, the complete development of all the natural faculties, may be fulfilled.

This system aims at teaching the child from the beginning of its existence to apply for itself the universal principle which we have been considering.

The order of the children's performances is so planned, that the application of this principle becomes continually wider, and by this means there is gradually awakened in the children the consciousness that all systematic working is based on it.

The above indications will, we hope, be sufficient, so far, to explain Fröbel's theory of the universe as is necessary to show its connection with his system of education. A full exposition of his philosophy is not contemplated here.

A true understanding of these generalities can only be arrived at through their practical application, and the knowledge of their results. And conversely the practical appli-

cation only gains meaning through knowledge of the fundamental idea.

The reason why Fröbel was so much condemned and run down, and even derided, during his lifetime, is that his ideas, owing to their novelty and apparent opposition to old-established methods, met, of necessity, with little comprehension.

Fröbel's philosophy and educational theories have certainly their "mystic" side, inasmuch as they are not at once apprehensible to every one, and in their entire scope, and also that much cannot yet be positively proved. Everything, moreover, may be said to be mystical which is still veiled from the understanding, and, therefore, also the origin and growth of every blade of grass is mystical. But that sort of mysticism which upholds what is unnatural, believes in the unsystematic, and encourages the illogical, Fröbel's philosophy with its clearness, order and regularity, is distinctly opposed to. Prophetic minds, of which all ages can boast some, see much that is hidden from the material eye, and that science has not yet discovered. The general apprehension of these visions is reserved for later times.

Those to whom the ideal side of Fröbel's system is inaccessible must content themselves with the purely practical part of it.

Those by whom the deeper foundations of the matter is acknowledged and accepted need not fear temporary error, misunderstanding, and criticism. They can well afford to leave the superficial part, possibly, too, here and there the erroneous part, to take care of itself, if only they keep firm hold of the kernel of the matter, without which its signification would cease. None must weary in their endeavour to get at this kernel, to show the connection that exists between theory and practice, to lay bare the fundamental thought which inspires the whole. The smallest efforts in this direction are not useless: and in this spirit we trust that the present work will be judged.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE KINDERGARTEN.

“Die Kindheit von heute  
Ist die Menschheit von morgen.”

“The children of to-day  
Are the men of to-morrow.”

FREDERIC FRÖBEL has succeeded in realizing what the educational geniuses who preceded him only strove after. But he has done more than simply embody their ideas in reality—whereas they concerned themselves only with methods of *instruction*, he has given to the world a true and complete method of *education*.

Fröbel gives to children experience instead of instruction, he puts action in the place of abstract learning. In the Kindergarten the child finds itself surrounded by a miniature world adapted to its requirements at different stages of growth, and through action in which it can develop itself according to the laws of its nature.

Let us first glance at the Kindergarten from outside, as it strikes the eye of the casual looker on, before we proceed to a comprehensive summary of Fröbel's educational system as a whole.

The pleasant sound of children's voices singing falls on the ear of the visitor as he enters the Kindergarten, and in an open-air space\* shaded with trees he sees a ring of little children from two to four or five years old, led by the Kindergarten teacher, and moving in rhythmic measures round one of their little comrades who is going through an energetic course of gymnastic exercises, which the others imitate: after a time the young instructor is relieved by another of the children, and so

\* In winter the play-ground is a large heated room.

on. To the gymnastic exercises succeed other *Bewegungsspiele* (movement games) representing incidents of husbandry and harvesting; or the way in which birds build their nests in woods, fly out and return home again, or phases of professional life, scenes from the market, and the shop, and so forth. All the games are accompanied by explanatory songs.

In the first period of childhood words and actions must always accompany each other; the child's nature requires this. Body and mind must not yet be occupied separately, but the gymnastics of the limbs should at the same time exercise the mental powers and dispositions. Fröbel's "movement-games" develop the limbs and muscles, while the accompanying music works on the feelings and imagination, and the words and action rouse the mind to observation, and finally the will to imitation of what has been observed. The promotion of physical health and strength is the main object of education in the Kindergarten.

A little further on in the garden, under a linen awning, will be seen three tables surrounded by benches with leaning backs, at each of which are seated ten children from four to seven years of age, working away busily and attentively. At one of the tables strips of different coloured papers, straw or leather, are being plaited into all sorts of pretty patterns, to make letter-cases, mats, baskets, boxes, &c. The patterns of the elder children are of their own invention, and their little productions are destined for presents to parents, brothers and sisters, and friends.

At the second table building with cubes has been going on. Before each child stands an architectural structure of its own planning, and all are listening attentively to the narrative of the teacher, in which each of the objects built up is made to play a part.

At the third table paper is being folded into all sorts of shapes, representing tools of different kinds, or flowers. All the various forms which the children produce are arrived at by gradual transitions from one fundamental mathematical form, and thus the elements of geometry are acquired in the Kindergarten, not through abstract instruction, but by observation and original construction.



In playful work and workful play the child finds a relief for, and the satisfaction of, his active impulses and receives an elementary grounding for all later work, whether artistic or professional. His physical senses as well as his mental faculties are all exercised in proportion to his age.

But the half-hour is at an end, and there must be no more sitting still. Spades, rakes, and watering-pots are now fetched out to work in the flower-beds, of which each child has one for its own. Flowers, vegetables and fruits are cultivated by the children in these little patches of ground, but in the general garden, which is the common charge of all the children, are grown all sorts of corn, field-products, and useful plants, and these serve as materials for an elementary course of botanical observation and experiment, when the children cannot be taken into the open fields and woods to study nature in her own workshops, to learn singing from the birds, and to watch the habits of the insects. In this garden, too, all kinds of animals are kept; chickens, doves, rabbits, hares, dogs, goats, and birds in cages, which have to be looked after and cared for.

Thus the child grows up under the influences of nature. He learns gradually to perceive the regularity of all organic formations; by the loving care which he is encouraged to bestow on animals and plants, his heart and sympathies are enlarged, and he becomes capable of love and sympathy for his fellow-creatures; and in imitating the works of nature he is led to discover and to love the Creator of nature, and to acknowledge Him as his own creator also, and he becomes imbued with the divine peace of nature before the turmoil of the world and of sin find their way into his heart.

But to return to the Kindergarten. The little ones whom we first saw engaged in gymnastics now come running and laughing up to the table deserted by the elder children, and in their turn take their seats for half an hour's work (for the quite little ones the time is limited to a quarter of an hour), and begin laying together and interlacing little laths or sticks in symmetrical shapes. "Forms of beauty," or systematic constructions without any special object; "forms of knowledge," or mathematical figures; "forms of practical life" or tools,

buildings, &c.; or else one of the many occupations of which the results may be seen in the glass cupboard of the play-room, is carried on. In this cupboard are a variety of articles modelled in clay, lace-like arabesques cut out of fine white paper and pasted on blue paper; ingenious devices of plaited straw, riband, and leather; all manner of drawings and paintings, too, according to Fröbel's new linear method; artistic little houses, churches, furniture, &c., constructed of little sticks fastened together by means of moistened peas, into which the ends of the sticks are stuck; in short, an art and industrial exhibition of the works of little manufacturers, under eight years old.

But these pretty things are not all intended for birthday or Christmas presents in the children's families. At the end of the year most of them are put into a lottery through which each of the children receives a little sum of money for its own work, and the joint proceeds are spent in dressing a Christmas-tree for the poor children of the neighbourhood, and the pleasure which the little donors derive from this tree is far greater than that which their own more costly one affords them.

By the side of the glass cupboard, in which the children's productions are kept, stands another containing dried plants, mosses, insects, shells, stones, crystals, and other wonders of nature, which have either been collected on different excursions, or are presents from relations and friends. This is the children's museum, and into it the little collectors often carry the commonest stones and weeds, for to children everything that they notice for the first time seems wonderful.

Work, which is at the same time fulfilment of duty, is the only true basis of moral culture, but it is necessary that such work should also satisfy the child's instinct of love, and the object of it must, therefore, be to give pleasure to others. With this end in view difficulties will be overcome with courage and cheerfulness, and the only effectual barrier will thus be opposed to selfishness. Only let children's earliest work and duties be made easy to them and they will infallibly learn to love them, and in later years they will not shrink from the sacrifices demanded by love. A true system of national education, such as the reforms of modern times render necessary, can only be

established by making work, such work as shall connect artistic dexterity with the cultivation of intelligence, the basis of education. The Kindergarten meets this want during the period of early childhood; the *Jugend*, or *Schulgarten*\* (Youth, or school-garden) with workshop, studio, camp, gymnastics, &c., must carry on the work afterwards on the same foundation.

And now the working hours are ended, and a choral melody resounds in our Kindergarten. The little ones with their teacher and her assistants† form into a circle and sing with childish reverence a short song, the words of which express gratitude to God for the blessings enjoyed, and a promise to live according to His will and that of their parents. The Kindergarten always opens and closes in this way with religious worship.

The work of religious development must begin by directing the child's imagination towards higher things, and there is no better means to this end than sacred song which arouses the devotional instincts. The influence of nature, in which the spirit of God breathes, combines with the sacred melodies to awaken in the mind its first dim perception of the organic connection of the universe, which has its ultimate origin in God.

Through association with its fellows, i.e., with other children of its own age, the child learns to love beyond the narrow range of self; and the love of human beings leads to the love of God. *Religion* means binding together, union (between God and man) and without loving fellowship religion cannot exist. Fröbel defines religion as "union with God," which can only grow out of union with mankind, or the love of human beings for one another.

To the above influence is added religious narrative, which in the case of the younger children is connected with facts experienced by themselves, and for the elder ones refers to Bible history.

Four hours of the day thus pass quickly by for the little

\* See "Die Arbeit und die neue Erziehung." Second edition, published by G. Wigand of Kassel.

† Young girls who help in the work of teaching, and are thus trained to be themselves Kindergarten teachers.

people, and then they hurry off to join the fathers, mothers, or nurses, who have come to fetch them, delighted at seeing them again, and eager to tell of all the pleasures and labours of the day, and to carry on by themselves at home the arts they have learnt—and there is never any room for the disagreeable guest, *ennui*.

Such is more or less what the visitor to a Kindergarten will see going on, and he will very likely think to himself, "This is all very nice and delightful, the children must certainly flourish better here, both physically and mentally, than in the close atmosphere of rooms, under the supervision of nurses and nursemaids (by whom the mother must at any rate be relieved during some hours of the day), or else left entirely without supervision. It is also better than the formal out-door walks in which children are generally led stiffly by the hand, instead of being allowed to run and jump about freely. Certainly these Kindergartens must be a great benefit to children, but do they deserve all the fuss that is made about them, all the expectations founded on them? And, even if a salutary reform has been effected in school education during its earliest stages, what has been done for the improvement of education in the home, which must always form the starting point, the kernel, of all human culture?

No, the Kindergarten is not all that is wanted, and Fröbel has not forgotten the important share which a family, above all the mother, has in the work of education. The cultivation of the female sex, through which the spiritual mother of humanity, its educator in the highest sense of the word, is to be realized, is essentially the starting-point of his educational method. The Kindergarten begins on the mother's lap. It is to the mother that Fröbel presents his "play-gifts;" on her preparatory training does the efficacy of the system depend; by her frequent presence at the Kindergarten it is hoped that she will take a personal part in the proceedings, and during the greater part of the day, when the child falls to her charge, she can herself guide its occupations on the same plan. All mothers will one day, we hope, be equal to this task. We look forward to a time when Fröbel's method shall be taught in all

girls' schools, and when it will have become universally acknowledged that all who have to do with children, fathers and mothers, nurses and governesses, should be versed in the science of education, in order that they may be able to satisfy the higher demands of the present stage of human culture.

Fröbel's general principles of education may be summed up under the three following heads: "freedom for development," "work for development," and "unity of development."

1. In nature, where everything works freely, unrestrainedly, and unartificially, there is scope for *freedom of development*. Freedom of growth among plants is only possible where this systematic development is not disturbed, and the necessary conditions of their growth are attended to. If they are to attain to full development, they must have proper care and attention. Plants shut up in dark cellars degenerate and die, and human nature, which lacks care and attention, especially in its earliest stages, degenerates and dies also. Children, if brought up among the wild animals of a forest, would become themselves almost animals, and bear scarcely any resemblance to human beings. It is only by applying the eternal principles of all organic development in the higher scale of human nature, that the clue will be found to freedom of development in the human being, as Fröbel understands it. Only there, where order and morality reign, where love and discipline are the guiding powers, can there be any question of freedom of development for the human soul. A wild up-shooting of untrained natural forces, the unfolding of the young human plant given over to chance, these are the very opposites of free development. Whatever also is contrary to Nature's laws for man hinders his development. His destiny, which is to become a morally reasonable being, makes a morally reasonable education indispensable. Development is emancipation: emancipation from the bands of rude unspiritualized matter; emancipation of the limbs and senses, of all the mental powers and faculties—this it is that makes freedom. But freedom of development is not sufficient without exercises for development.

2. Fröbel says: "Man is destined to rise out of himself

by means of his own activity, to attain to a continually higher stage of self-knowledge." Thus it is only through its own exertions, its own work, through personal action, that the child can so develop itself, in accordance with its human nature, as to realize its true self, to express, as it were, the *thought of God* which dwells in every being. According to Fröbel, man is born into the world more weak and helpless than any animal, in order that, by the resistance which the things of the outward world oppose to his weakness, he may be incited to the exertion of inward strength. A child cannot learn to walk without trouble and effort; and it is only after thousands of times repeated attempts that it learns to make itself understood, that is to say, to talk.

But if the child's efforts and exertions be left to themselves, they will fall very far short of their natural end, and, therefore, education must come to their assistance and guidance, and establish discipline and control where otherwise caprice would step in, and confusion of ungoverned forces reign. There is, however, a kind of discipline which is contrary to nature, as well as one in accordance with it, and this unnatural discipline leads to artificiality, and the suppression of individual personality, which, indeed, it rather aims at doing away with and replacing by something conventional.

What may be called *new* in Fröbel's Kindergarten plan is the practical means which he has discovered and applied for disciplining and developing body, soul, and mind, will, feelings, and understanding, in accordance with the laws of Nature. All the materials which he sets before children, all their playthings, are so contrived as to meet their innate impulse to activity, and that in a rightly ordered sequence corresponding to every stage of the soul's progressive development. The child is thus led on by easy simple stages to modelling, production, and creation. Only by original creation can it fully express its inner self, its individual being; and this it must do if it is to attain to worthy existence.

*Action*, i.e., the application of knowledge, the carrying out of ideas, is what our age calls for more and more loudly, and what the young generation must be trained for; and in view

of this Fröbel would have children learn even in their earliest games to act and to create; he would have work and action precede abstract study, and be made the means and educator to prepare for the later acquisition of knowledge. In order to produce strength and greatness of character (and what is more needed at the present time?), it is necessary to awaken will and energy, resolution and a sense of duty; this is done in the Kindergarten by means of personal activity in an atmosphere of happiness and contentment. To train pupils in the great workshops of the Creator to be themselves one day creators, to bring human beings nearer and nearer to the likeness of God, this is the purpose of the "Development exercises," which are carried on in the Kindergarten.

3. All organic development is continuous, unbroken, and, progressing from stage to stage, forms a closely interconnected whole. In Nature this continuity, or connectedness, exists unconsciously, but in the world of human life it must be the result of deliberate conscious volition, and must lead up to the apprehension of the highest cosmic unity, *i.e.*, to the knowledge of God.

Education to be worthy of a human being must, therefore, be continuous, must proceed upon the same plan from the beginning, though in a progressive sequence, according to the natural stages of development. The first playthings must stand in proper social relation to the last, the first elementary lessons must be in connection with the topmost pinnacle of later knowledge; the moral culture especially depends on harmony in the whole treatment of the child. Human existence begins in unconsciousness, and has to pass through all the successive stages of growing consciousness, until it reaches complete self-knowledge. Fröbel says: "The clearer the thread which runs through our lives backwards—back to our childhood—the clearer will be our onward glance to the goal."

Such continuity in education is as yet nowhere aimed at: fathers and mothers, nurses and governesses, servants and friends, all influence the child in different, too often in quite opposite, directions. There is no such thing as transition in education—no point of connection between the first period

which is the sport of caprice and chance, and the following lesson—and school-time, between the first years of mere idle amusement, and the beginnings of practical activity and exercise of duty: nowhere, in short, is continuity in the lessons, occupations, and lives of children so much as thought of.

The relations of the human being to the surrounding world, to Nature and his fellow-creatures—with which latter relations is bound up the highest of all, that of the creature to its Creator—begin with his birth. The most important relation at the commencement of life is that between child and mother, and it is in the mother's hand accordingly that Fröbel places the first end of the Ariadne thread, which is to lead the child through the labyrinth of life. The mother's play and caresses (*see* Fröbel's "*Mutter u. Koselieder*") form the first foundation on which the Kindergarten, and the after-training of school and life, are built up. The logical continuity, the strict order of sequence in its games and occupations, which hang together like the links of a chain, so that the one always prepares for the other; the unbroken series of transitions; the close connection between childish conceptions and ideas and their realization—all this can only be fully appreciated after a close study of the details, both theoretical and practical, of Fröbel's system. But no one, having once made the study, can doubt that the complete and universal carrying out of the Kindergarten theory, the first, though imperfect, steps towards which have already been taken in many countries of Europe, and in the United States of America, would contribute enormously towards the production of men and women whose lives, actions, and thoughts shall make up a complete whole, whose personality and individual characteristics shall stand out strongly, and who shall have the courage to be always themselves, and not to lower themselves to the condition of conventional puppets.

It is only a more harmonious development of the special characteristics of individuals that can lead to the concord and unity of masses, whether of families, communities, or nations, and thence to the unity of mankind—the goal towards which the strongest impulse of our age is tending, and the next step



to which is union with God. Fröbel sums up the various syntheses which humanity has to work out under the title of *Lebenseinigung* (unity of life), and calls to his contemporaries to work in the field of education towards the fulfilment of this idea with the motto :

“Kommt, lasst uns den Kindern leben !”

“Come, let us live for our children.”

In his book for mothers he says :

“Parents, let your home a children’s garden be,  
Where with watchful love the young plant’s growth you see ;  
A shelter let it be to them from all  
The dangers which their bodies may befall ;  
And still more a soil in which will grow,  
The inward forces that from God do flow ;  
Which with a father’s love He unto men has given,  
That by their use they may upraise themselves to Heaven.”

NOTE.—It is not difficult to see why the hitherto imperfect organization of existing Kindergartens is only now beginning to approximate to something corresponding to the original idea. The greatest obstacle to the perfect realization of this idea (especially as regards national Kindergartens) arises from the insufficient means of localization and the scarcity of teachers, which necessitate taking in too many children at a time. The crowding together of herds of children, which must result in confusion, and prevent the teacher from giving sufficient individual attention to her pupils, is by no means what Fröbel contemplated. He wished the number of children in national Kindergartens to be limited to thirty, or at the outside forty ; or else a larger number to be broken up into groups of thirty, under one teacher. This, as well as many other points, which have hitherto been overlooked, will meet with proper consideration, as the matter becomes more fully understood, and its development progresses. At present the chief thing to be considered, is how to make the establishment of Kindergartens as general as possible.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## FRÖBEL'S "MUTTER UND KOSELIEDER."

FRÖBEL himself says of this book : " I have here laid down the most important part of my educational method ; this book is the starting point of a natural system of education for the first years of life, for it teaches the way in which the germs of human dispositions must be nourished and fostered, if they are to attain complete and healthy development."

But over and over again we hear people exclaim after a superficial glance through the book : " What wretched poetry, what lame rhymes, what unintelligible illustrations, and, above all, what absurdity ! the idea of wanting to regulate and control a mother's caressing and fondling of her child !" &c.

And such a judgment would not be incorrect as far as the many imperfect verses and the style of the book generally is concerned. But at the same time many successful rhymes, and much true poetry will be found side by side with the philosophic thoughts thus embodied in the form of verse : and what is of greater importance, there is a fund of childlike simplicity and *naïveté* which seems to come straight from the child's soul, and must meet with response there. But above all it must not be forgotten that the mottoes contained in this book are intended for grown-up people, *i.e.* for mothers, and only the songs for children—and of these the greater number are fully adapted to infant comprehension.

Notwithstanding, however, that the form of the book is quite a secondary consideration, it is capable of being improved when its substance has come to be understood. And this substance is not only new and important, but it is in the highest degree the production of genius. It reveals the process of

development of the inner, instinctive life of childhood, and converts the intuitive, purposeless action of mothers into an intelligent plan, in a way which has never before been even attempted. The key-note of the book is the analogy between the development of humanity from its earliest infancy, and that of the individual. The fact that the germs of all human faculties and dispositions, as they show themselves in the life of humanity, in its passions, its efforts after culture, its whole manner of existence, are traceable in the nature of children as manifested in their instinctive utterances, this fact, I say, must be taken into account, in order that the games of children may be turned to their natural purpose, viz., the assistance of the child's development.

So long as the analogy between the course of the development of humanity and that of individual man is only recognized outwardly, and treated more or less as a fact in science, so long will little practical use be made of it. But it acquires an immense degree of importance, when once it is made the means of supplying education with an infallible guide, childhood with a regulator for its blind impulses, its uncertain groping and fumbling, and the maternal instinct with a safe channel to flow in.

The practical hints contained in this book of Fröbel's consist, it is true, of mere disconnected fragments, too often couched in obscure language. But experience proves that the mother's instinct is equal to the task of piecing the fragments together and rightly applying them.

All ideas assume at starting a crude, unbeautiful shape, which for a time serves rather to hide and disfigure the inner meaning; but when this meaning has at last made itself felt, the outward form becomes gradually remodelled and brought into accordance with it. And so it has been with the play of children. Its high significance had first to be discovered and made known before it could be embodied in a form corresponding to its object and to the degree of culture reached by civilized humanity.

And even Fröbel in the book in question has only taken the first step towards the attainment of this purpose, has done no more than point out in what manner it is possible. The filling up of gaps in the system, greater perfection of arrangement,

and improvement in the outward form will not be difficult when, through more universal practical application, Fröbel's great educational theory meets with more and more thorough understanding. Genius has but to give utterance to its thoughts, and they will in due time become embodied in appropriate forms.

Fröbel rightly calls this book a *family book*, for only by its use in the family, in the hands of mothers, can it fulfil its purpose, and contribute towards raising the family to a level of human culture corresponding to the advanced civilization of the day, and preparing mothers for their vocation in the highest sense.

Fröbel made his "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" the foundation of his lectures to Kindergarten teachers on his theory, and over and over again repeated: "I have here laid down the fundamental ideas of my educational theory; whoever has grasped the pivot idea of this book understands what I am aiming at. But how many do understand it? Learned men have too great a contempt for the book to give it more than cursory attention; and the majority of mothers only see in it an ordinary picture-book with little songs. No doubt there are finer pictures and better verses to be had than mine, but of what use are they if wanting in any educational power? Only a small minority of people get from my book a real understanding of my educational theory in all its fulness, but, if only mothers and teachers would follow its guidance they would at last see, in spite of all opposition, that I am right."

I once replied to a similar outburst: "It is not always easy to trace the connection between the examples you give and the idea you wish to illustrate: many of these are of such a kind that one must search long before one sees the reason of their being cited, and those who do not take this trouble will never find it out. This is the reason why so many people reject great part of the substance of the book: they say it is so far-fetched, so unnatural, it is thought out artificially instead of being taken from observation of child-nature. You yourself have had experience of such objections, and so have I in the course of my exposition of the system. If you would only draw the conclusions of your ideas yourself and collect them together in a commentary they would be much

easier to understand, and the book which you consider of so great importance would at least be recognized by the thinking world."

To which Fröbel answered: "You do not know what you are asking: I should then be obliged to say everything, and I should be still less understood. None but the children who are brought up in Kindergartens will ever understand my philosophy in its breadth and depth. Let the world laugh at me now as much as it likes for my ordering and arranging of children's play, it will one day acknowledge that I am right, for the children will understand me and know that I understood them and fathomed the depths of their nature. If you are not afraid of being laughed at with me, do you write what you think is desirable for a better understanding of the system: I am only too willing that you should."

It was Fröbel's misfortune that he had not the gift of expressing himself clearly and attractively in words; indeed, it was a long time before he even realized that this was necessary, and that the concrete practical form in which he had so completely embodied his educational ideas, and which was to him the most natural form of expression, was not universally intelligible. Had it not been for the repeated experience that his system was not understood by the general public, or even by the thinking world, he would, perhaps, never have attempted to translate his practical language into words. That neither his written nor his spoken explanations contributed to make Kindergartens more popular must be attributed to this want in his own nature, and not to any fault in his method of education.

The following very imperfect attempt to throw some light on the contents of "Mutter u. Koselieder" would have been given to the public sooner, but for the repeated experience that in no way is so much opposition to Fröbel's system excited, as by any endeavour to propagate this book. Yet, at the same time, there is no book that gives more pleasure, to mothers especially, than this one. It will not be unprofitable to communicate my experiences on this point.

In all the towns of different countries in which I delivered

lectures on Fröbel's system (which lectures were almost always followed by the introduction of the system), in Paris, Brussels, London, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchatel, Amsterdam, the Hague, Rotterdam, &c., as also in many German towns, I found pretty generally that the ideas most difficult to make intelligible, both to the learned and the unlearned, both to men and women, were the following :—

1. That the first mental development of the child goes on in its play, and that this play needs, consequently, to be as much systematized as the instruction imparted at a later age.

2. That by rightly meeting and assisting the natural force which vents itself in play, or by faulty and mistaken treatment of it, it may be directed either to good—*i.e.*, to its true use—or to evil—*i.e.*, its abuse ; and

3. That the examples given in the "*Mutter und Koselieder*" are psychologically based on the instinctive life of the child, even though they are not always expressed in the most perfect form.

Many profound thinkers, as well among psychologists as natural philosophers, were beyond measure astonished at Fröbel's theory, and gave their hearty agreement to it. Women of simple minds, but true motherly hearts, added their approval with tears in their eyes. They were struck by so much truth as "by lightning," as one of them expressed it, and they felt the force of the book without yet thoroughly understanding it. Indeed, the contents of this book never failed to touch the hearts of mothers. It was only dry intellectual natures that exercised their powers of criticism on it without ever grasping its spirit.

And such criticism, we must own, is not unfair as regards the choice of many of the examples. But these examples must nevertheless be retained until a complete understanding of the theory shall make a new and faultless selection possible.

The nature of babies and young children is still much less considered by scientific observers than is that of plants and animals, and there is consequently in this field an infinite number of discoveries and experiences to be collected together,

which in their importance for the well-being of human society are second to no science whatever. What Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, Burdach, Schleiermacher, and others have effected in this direction is still very little compared with what has yet to be done in order that education may really bear good fruit, and the secret workings of the child's mind and spirit be fully revealed. The side of the question which Fröbel specially illustrated, and for which he devised his practical method of application had, before his time, been almost wholly neglected. It is true that he was generally in agreement with Burdach's theories concerning the meaning of the first utterances of children, and when reading his works in the company of friends his face would beam with pleasure when he came to a passage that specially pleased him, and he would exclaim,—“See, I am right after all; he has found it out too!” But at the same time he was fully aware that in his fundamental idea he had discovered a new point of departure which had been overlooked by all his predecessors.

However much or little the nature of children may have been studied, no one has come up to Fröbel in his searching analysis of every phase and detail of their development. Following the example of modern natural science, which has descended from the study of the greatest phenomena to that of the least, and is making its most important discoveries through microscopic investigations, Fröbel, in the field of human nature, goes back to the smallest beginnings, and finds thus the first link in the chain which connects one moment of human development with all the others. He finds the law which lies at the bottom of all systematic development, and discovers the means for the application of this law. In the growth of the child he sees the same system of law as in organic growth generally, and he points out the complete analogy between the development of the child and that of the organisms of Nature and of humanity as an organic whole.

A new basis has thus been given to education, and it remains for us to build up upon it. But we must be content to wait patiently. Fröbel's philosophy will share the fate of all other great truths, which come into the world as the hypotheses of

single individuals, and have to bide their time until by slow degrees their importance has become generally recognized, and, by the weeding out of superfluous matter, their essential points survive as positive science.\*

\* In the work of the Baroness v. Marenholtz-Bülow, entitled "*Die neue Arbeit und die Erziehung nach Fröbel's Methode*," Fröbel's educational theories are fully expounded.



## CHAPTER IX.

## EARLIEST DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIMBS.

DURING the first years of life the physical development is the most marked and prominent, but the growth of the soul, though unperceived, goes on, nevertheless, all the while; for in infancy body and soul are still completely in union, and can only be developed through mutual interaction. It is on this principle that Fröbel has compiled his "*Mutter u. Koselieder*." The games introduced in this book are adapted both to cultivating the limbs and senses, and guiding and assisting the mind in its first awakening stage.\*

Gymnastic exercises have come to be regarded as essential to bodily health, and their use in later childhood and youth is consequently gaining more and more ground in the present day. But bodily discipline is essential also to the moral well-being of humanity. By developing muscular force the will is strengthened, and grace of mind and spirit increases in proportion to physical grace.

Now, if children require systematic muscular exercises when they can already walk and run and jump, they need them still more beforehand. Circus-riders and tight-rope dancers are taken at the tenderest age to be trained for their professions, because it is known that the pliability of the limbs decreases with every additional year.

For centuries past the maternal instinct, following its playful bent, has devised all manner of little games which tend to exercise children's limbs; but these, like everything else that

\* The following explanations would be more intelligible, if, side by side with them, readers would study the book itself, in which the pictures help to illustrate the meaning.

human beings do merely from instinct, fall far short of what they should be.

The popular nursery-games that have been handed down by tradition are very much alike in all civilized countries, for they are the product of the natural instinct of mothers, which is the same all over the world and in all ages. Of these Fröbel collected together all that were suitable for his purpose. During the greater part of his life it was his habit to go about familiarly among the homes of the people, in order to observe the ways of mothers with their babies; and in this way he accumulated a whole store of national nursery and cradle songs, which he adapted for his own use, taking care always to eliminate from them all the coarse expressions, unchildlike ideas, or utter nonsense, which too often disfigured and spoil them. Mothers never play with their children in perfect silence; they invariably talk or sing to them all the while, and those among us, who can still recall, with inward emotion, the first songs with which their mother's voice lulled them to sleep in their infancy, will not wonder at Fröbel's connecting the earliest awakening of feeling with the songs that accompany his games.

The object of ordinary gymnastic exercises is to produce the completest possible development of all the muscles. This, however, would be fatiguing for young children, who, during the first years of their life, require to be equally stimulated on all sides of their nature. Every branch, too, of their training must be carried on by the most gradual process. Both these essentials are fully considered in Fröbel's "Gymnastic Games." The gymnastics of the body serve, at the same time, to promote the growth of the mental and spiritual organs, and the first playful activity of the child is made the starting-point, and the preparation for all later development, both in the Kindergarten and the school, so that there may be sequence and continuity in the whole course of education.

Life may be defined as activity, and all activity, which is in proportion to the natural strength, and not over-straining, is enjoyment. This truth is exemplified in the gambols of young animals, and in the case of little children who derive the greatest enjoyment from kicking their feet against some object

which offers resistance, or against the hands of their mothers, who should encourage them to repeat the exercise, for it strengthens the muscles of their backs and legs. But the principal gymnastic exercises in Fröbel's book have reference to the hand, which is the most important member of the human body. The increased use of machinery in the present day tends more and more to relieve human beings from all the rougher kind of manual labour, but there is, on the other hand, in all branches of industry a growing demand for artistic work, and it is, therefore, of the greatest importance that care should be bestowed on cultivating manual dexterity. We have but to look at the children of the working-classes to see how stiff and awkward are usually those limbs which will one day be called upon to work for their bread. Unless the hand be exercised at the beginning of life a great measure of its pliability is lost, and the muscles do not acquire sufficient strength to be able to satisfy the modern technical demands of all kinds. Pianoforte players, sculptors, and other artists, know that it is only by practice, carried on from their earliest childhood, that they can attain perfect mastery in the technicalities of their arts. Education should, therefore, begin with teaching the *management* of material, or manual work, then go on to the *transformation* of material, which constitutes art or industry, and finally lead up to the *spiritualization* of material. Not time only, but much tedious discipline also would be saved in late years if children acquired a certain amount of mechanical dexterity by means of their early games.

In his "Mutter u. Koselieder," too, Fröbel has had regard to the threefold character of relationship in which the individual is bound to Nature, to Humanity, and to God, in which all his other relationships are comprised, and which the human being enters into at his birth.

All things whatsoever that surround a child are either products of Nature or of human culture, and have their ultimate origin in God. Now, the child's relation to these things should be conveyed to him with the utmost possible clearness and definiteness, while, at the same time, the impression of unity and

continuity, in which, as yet, everything appears to him, must be preserved as much as possible. A child is not a divided being at variance with himself and the universe, but a harmonious whole—one in his unconsciousness, and, therefore, still innocent, and without any suspicion of discords or divisions.

We have thus seen that the object of the “Mutter u. Koselieder” is to bring out in the infant, during its unconscious period, the points of contact at which its being passes into relationship with Nature, with Humanity, and with God. By means of little hand-games, accompanied by songs, its attention is directed to objects of nature and human industry, and by a gradual process its mind is led up to the Creator of all things.

Let us examine a few specimens from the “Mutter u. Koselieder,” and see how Fröbel carries out his ideas.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE CHILD'S FIRST RELATIONS TO NATURE.

WE must here, of course, take for granted that the essential conditions of true education are at hand, and also teachers who understand how to make use of these conditions. In the streets of great cities, where many a child grows up to the age of ten years or more without making any acquaintance with Nature, without seeing anything of the life of fields and forests, of the animal and the vegetable universe, Fröbel's system of education cannot possibly be applied (unless there are Kindergartens within reach to supply the life of Nature), and the human being must go without the most essential and natural elements of its development. The Kindergartens should supply to children the atmosphere of country-life which is of such vital importance to them, and we feel assured that the day will come when it will be considered disgraceful for a human being to grow up without coming into contact with the glorious world of Nature, where the breath of Nature's God breathes with life-giving power.

When a child of about a year old is taken out of doors, the things that first attract its notice are those that move. Movement signifies to children *life*, and is what they first become aware of. Hence the child's glance will at once be arrested by a weather-cock, or any other object, moved by the wind.

## THE WEATHER-COCK

the name given to one of the first games for hand-gymnastics in the "Mutter u. Koselieder."

The hand stretched out sideways with the thumb held upright, represents the weather-cock, and the movement from one side

to the other forms an exercise for the muscles which connect the arm and the hand, and are the most important in all handiwork.

But, in order that it may fulfil the purpose of strengthening the muscles, the movement must be uniform and regular. This is not generally the case with ordinary nursery hand-games.

Children only really understand what comes into immediate contact with them, and is, so to speak, part of their lives. No amount of vague staring at weather-cocks, or any other object swayed by the wind, will produce in them anything like a true impression of a force which causes the movement; but, if they imitate it themselves by the voluntary action of their hands, they will, after frequent repetition of the exercise, begin dimly to realize the idea of an invisible force at work behind the visible manifestation.

Position of the hand.



The motto of this game, addressed to the mother, is as follows :

“Wouldst thou give thy child of outward things a notion,  
Let it learn early to imitate their motion.  
Thus in these things deeply ground it,  
It will learn  
To discern,  
And to copy things around it.”

A. G.

#### SONG.

“As the weather-cock on the tower  
Turns about in wind and shower,  
Baby moves its hands with pleasure,  
Round and round in merry measure.”

A. G.

If the action were not accompanied by explanatory words,

the child's intelligence and power of speech would not be called out.

The next important step, viz., to connect the visible phenomena of which the child has been made conscious, with an invisible cause, is easily taken. The mother, for instance, says: "The wind moves the trees, the mill, the kite, &c.," and then asks, "Where is the wind?" and when the child begins to look about in search of the wind, she says: "The wind does all this, but we cannot see the wind."

Another game is called

#### THE SUN-BIRD,

and consists in reflecting the sun's rays through a bit of glass, and letting them play on the wall. The mother or teacher says to the child, "Catch the bird," and after he has made two or three vain attempts to do so, she adds, "We can see the bird, but it will not let us catch it." The child thus learns at an early age that it is not only material possession that gives pleasure, that beauty has the power to penetrate to the soul, and to produce greater happiness than mere enjoyment of the senses can afford.

The knowledge impressed on its mind in various ways that material things cannot be laid hold of with all the senses, and that their ultimate cause cannot be grasped at all, leads the child at the very beginning of its observations from the idea of matter to something higher than matter, and accustoms it to reason from the visible world to a higher invisible one, and to a higher power ruling in everything. It must be well understood, of course, that at first children are only capable of receiving a more or less distinct impression of this truth.

But not the phenomena of the earth only, those of the heavens also, the sun, the moon, and the stars, are made use of by Fröbel to convey to the child's mind a sense of the relationship of man to the universe. And here he adopts the only possible means, viz., awakening in the child a perception of the living bond of union which connects everything together as a whole, the power of sympathy and love. The child suspects as yet no

divisions and contradictions in the world; his nearest surroundings, which speak to him as love, are for him the measure and pattern of everything else. Neither has he any conception of distance, but snatches at the far-off moon as at the flower close to him. And this sense of the unity and continuity of the outward world, which is the result of his own inward harmony, or innocence, it must be our endeavour to preserve for him, and not let the knowledge of conflicting forces open his eyes any sooner to divisions and discords than growing self-consciousness will sooner or later unavoidably do for him. The intuitive perception in the child's soul of the oneness and unity of God is after all the eternal truth, and all the warring and strife in the more conscious lives of men and women only a passing phenomenon of spiritual growth.

#### THE CHILD AND THE MOON

is an example of the only intelligible way in which the great universal harmony and concord of all created things can be communicated to the child's mind, viz., through the idea of love to himself.

#### SONG.

*(To be said or sung by the Mother.)*

"See, my child, the moon's sweet light,  
Up in heaven shining bright.  
Moon come down, come quickly here  
To my little child so dear."  
"Gladly would I come and play  
With you, but too far away  
I live, and from my home above  
I cannot come to those I love.  
But I send my shining light  
To make the earth you live on bright,  
Just to please you, little child,  
I look down with my glance so mild;  
And, although I'm far away,  
I watch with love your merry play.  
You must promise me to be  
Good and kind, and then you'll see,



I shall often, often come,  
And look in at your happy home ;  
And when my shining light you see,  
You must wave a kiss to me."  
"Good-bye, good-bye, dear moon,  
Come back again right soon ! "

Thus Fröbel would have the natural phenomena of the universe made use of as stepping-stones to higher knowledge, and, above all things, by leading the child's observations in gradual stages from created things up to the Creator, he would make these phenomena the means of conveying to the child's soul a conception of the highest Being. As he himself says, "My system of education is based on religion, and intended to lead up to religion."

The child's relation also to the world of plants and animals will only become real and vivid to him if he has to do with them himself, if from his cradle he has grown up among flowers, and has not lacked animal playfellows, "his brothers beneath him," as the French historian, Michelet, says.

Fröbel would have liked to see hung up before the cradle of every infant a bird in a cage, the movements and twitterings of which would occupy the child's attention immediately on its awaking, and prevent that idle brooding by which the weight of the material world smothers the feeble spark of the spirit. Even young babies should be brought into contact with all the elementary forces of nature—which are those most closely related to its own nature—and for this purpose they should spend the greater part of the day, when the weather and season allow it, in the open air, where the voices of wind and water, colour, form, and sounds of thousand-fold kinds, will be their first instructors. Thus the senses will be trained and fitted for conveying to the soul its earliest nourishment. Without cultivation of the senses cultivation of the soul is impossible. Too little distinction, however, is still made between disciplined and undisciplined enjoyment of the senses. Real, elevated, mental enjoyment can only be realized through cultivated senses, and it is only by means of such enjoyment that the delight in coarse gratification of the senses, which is incompatible with human dignity, can be overcome.

Children should be encouraged, also, to call around them the chickens, pigeons, or other domestic animals at hand, and, whilst they are scattering food before them, little songs may be sung in which the modes of life of these animals may be described. Children are not capable of intelligent observation of human life, and can only understand the actions of human beings in so far as they have any relation to themselves. The life of animals, on the other hand, supplies them with hundreds of scenes in which the rude primitive existence, out of which humanity has developed itself, is reflected.

**"THE FARM-YARD GATE"**

is imitated by the position of hands and arms as represented in the accompanying illustration, and the song that goes with it teaches the names of the different languages of domestic animals.



**THE FARM-YARD GATE.**

What can this be ? A gate I see !  
Oh ! come into the court with me ;  
The horses are springing,  
The pigeons are flying,  
The geese are chattering,  
The ducks are quacking,  
The hens are cackling,  
The cock is crowing,  
The cow is lowing,  
The calf is sporting,  
The lamb is baaing,  
The sheep is bleating,  
The pig is grunting ;

Closely shut the gate must be,  
That none may run away,  
But all in peace together stay.

A. G.

It is generally the sight of animals that first awakens in children a desire for knowledge. With a little encouragement and direction they will easily learn their names and chief characteristics, and be led to observe their movements, habits, manner of life, &c.; they will learn how to manage and look after them, and so get to love them, and know their value to mankind. And all this knowledge will be a preparation for life and intercourse in the world of human beings. If children have early learnt to observe the endless differences that exist in the conditions of animals, how all the separate species, varying in their ways and requirements, live and flourish in different elements and surroundings, they will not be so liable to fall into the philistine habit of criticizing and condemning everything in which their fellow-creatures differ from themselves—the seeds of wide-hearted toleration and love of justice will have been planted in them.

All the different images and influences of nature produce corresponding moods in the human mind. A landscape, smiling in the sunshine, impresses the mind very differently from a hurricane by the sea-shore, and the song of the nightingale produces a different effect from the croaking of owls. The young child perceives at first only individual objects in nature; the thing which is occupying him at the moment is all that will excite his attention or influence his mind.

To grown people and children alike impressions produced by nature seem, more or less, the creation of their own souls, and for this reason, that there is everywhere harmony between the outward world and the inner nature of man, everywhere analogies may be traced between the material and the spiritual world: and how should it be otherwise when the Spirit which pervades both these inter-dependent worlds is one and the same Spirit of God?

To a song called "The Little Fishes," which is accompanied by a finger exercise imitating the swimming undulating move-

ment of fish, Fröbel has affixed the following motto (which, indeed, may be considered the key to all the songs in the book),—



“Where there's movement, where there's action,  
For the child's eye there's attraction!  
Where brightness, melody, and measure,  
Its little heart will throb with pleasure.

Oh! Mothers, strive to keep these young souls fresh and clear,  
That order, truth, and beauty, always may be dear!”

Cleanliness and order in everything that relates to a child's bodily wants will also influence the purity of its soul, just as the delight in clear sparkling water, and all that is bright and transparent, has more to do with the spiritual nature than the bodily senses. “All things are parables” (*Alles ist Gleichniss*), said Goethe, when he wanted to express the analogy between the world of outward phenomena and the world of thought and ideas. The time will come when the whole symbolic language of nature will be clear and intelligible to mankind.

It is not mere infantine curiosity which is at work when children peer with eager eyes into a nest full of young birds. The snug little home, in which the parent-birds nestle out of sight with their young ones, is to the child a picture of its own home life, which he cannot form a distinct objective conception of, until he has seen it, as it were, placed at a distance from himself. His own parents are too closely united with him, too much part of his own life, for him to be able to form a right idea of his relations to them.

A child of two or three years old, who tries hard to round



his little hands into the shape of a bird's-nest, singing all the

while the little "bird-song," will be sure at the same time to think of his own dear mother.

Two pretty birds built a soft warm nest,  
In which together they may rest;  
Three round eggs in the nest they lay,  
And hatch three young birds one fine day!  
"Twit, twit, twit," the young ones call,  
"Mother, thou art so dear to us all."

A. G.

Fröbel uses this example, of the visible providence of parents, to lead the mind up to the invisible providence of the all-protecting Heavenly Father. The child is then taught to observe either in real life, or in the pictures of the "*Mutter und Koselieder*," how every little bird is taken care of in a special way, how it builds its nest where it is safe from danger, and where the food it requires is within reach, and that it builds this nest, and hatches its young ones, at the time of year when the unfledged little creatures will be protected by the warmth of the Spring sun, and so forth. And then the mother, drawing the child's attention to the fearlessness with which the little birds lie quietly in their nest, waiting for the return of *their* mother, who has gone to fetch them food, repeats these words:

"The heavenly Father's glorious sun  
Warms thy home too and makes it bright,  
He shines on thee and every one,  
Look up and thank him for his light."

And many other verses of the book point in like manner to God's all-ruling Providence.

The child, who, at the age of two years, has imitated the watering of flowers, in the hand-game called the "watering-pot," when it is a year or two older, will delight in carrying water to real flowers, and somewhat later on will tend its patch of ground diligently, for its senses will from the very first, have been awakened to the fact that all living things require care and love, and that love must show itself in action. What-ever children have to take care of they learn to love, and,

through the care and attention bestowed on plants and animals, their feelings will be so enlarged and cultivated that in after-life they will be capable of making sacrifices for the human beings whom they love.

As every human instinct has its analogy in nature, so has that instinct of which conscience is in time developed. If the order and regularity of nature be rightly understood, and the evil recognized which follows neglect or violation of natural laws, the order of the moral world, transgression against which constitutes sin, will be easily grasped. Just as every breach of the laws of Nature speaks distinctly in the outward visible world, so does the voice of conscience make itself loudly heard within, when, by something unworthy of its higher destiny, the laws of human nature are violated.

None but those who do not understand or observe the nature and character of children, who have forgotten their own childhood, and have no feeling or love for nature, will consider it a piece of far-fetched absurdity, thus to interpret the earliest games of children as the starting-point of the life of the soul, and the beginning of mental development. If the first play and laughter of the infant had no connection with the last deeds of the old man, how could we pretend to believe in anything like continuity in human life, and man's inward development? Only when the idea of this continuity has been fully grasped, when education shall succeed in preserving unbroken the thread which connects the child with the youth, will the man live and act to the end of his days up to the ideal of his youth. And then only shall we see real men and women truly great and worthy characters.

In an age like ours, when fresh advances must be made in order, as far as possible, to heal the breach which has hitherto existed between man and nature—and which was necessary for the growth of human understanding and consciousness—and to bring humanity and nature, by the conquest and spiritualization of the latter, into a new bond of union, in an age when natural science places itself at the head of all science, and subdues to itself one department of life after another, a new

generation must not be allowed to grow up without receiving its initiation in this temple of Divine revelation, and being fitted to exercise wisely the sovereignty assigned to man over the kingdom of Nature. And this initiation must take place at the very commencement of life, through the teaching of the symbolic language of Nature, which children's eyes can read better than others. As humanity in the dawn of its existence apprehended clearly the language of Nature, and heard in it distinctly the voice of God, so in the thousand voices of Nature does the child hear God speaking to it, and lofty truths are the first impressions made on its soul. The rippling brook tells him the loveliest fairy tales; the vine-leaves swayed by the summer breeze reveal to him the first secrets of beauty; the flowers greet him as brothers and sisters, and exchange smiling glances with him; the wind-chased clouds, painted by the evening sun, shape themselves to his fancy into magic pictures of an ideal world; butterflies and insects speak to him in a familiar language, and the birds gladden his heart with poetry that is ever new.

In such a world of beauty and divine peace, the young heart will so expand and strengthen as to be able later to endure the turmoil and strife of the human world, will acquire force sufficient to overcome all adverse powers, and gain an indomitable belief in the Divine Spirit, and an immutable trust in the fatherly love of God.

"What God has joined together, let not man separate!" says Fröbel with regard to man's "union with Nature."

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE CHILD'S FIRST RELATIONS TO MANKIND.

THE child awakens to life in its mother's arms, its mother is, so to say, its own wider life. Without her care, without her looks of love, existence would offer a sorry prospect to the young new-comer. The mother must be her child's first mediator with the world and mankind.

The physical union between mother and child, which still continues for some time after birth, becomes gradually loosened, and that first by the child learning to walk, which is the first stage of physical independence. But even in this earliest period of the child's life a certain degree of spiritual union, between mother and child, must have been gained, if, with the growing freedom and independence of body, there is to be an increase of the mental union from which the mother derives her chief educational power. Woe to the child who learns to run without ever, during its first exercise of this new freedom, hurrying back in terror to his mother's loving arms! To the end of his life there will be a void in his soul, for the first love-bond in his life was not knit closely and securely enough. But if the hearts of mother and child are rightly fused together, during the period of bodily union and earliest nurture, then the physical emancipation of the child will work in the opposite direction as regards mind and spirit: spiritual union will increase with the child's consciousness of its physical independence of its mother, with the development of its personality.

The first utterance through which the child expresses its love-relationship to human beings, to its mother, is *smiling*. The human heart alone is capable of laughter and tears, and for the newborn infant this is the only language at command to express its wants and feelings.



All relationships start from one point, one object, and they must first be firmly knit round this point before they can bear to have their limits widened. Thus the mother should be the central point round which the child's being revolves at first, she should not allow any one else to have so much to do with him as herself, in order that his heart may learn to concentrate itself. A great deal of harm is still done in this respect by nurses and other servants. The children of wealthy parents, who are surrounded by numbers of attendants, and handed over first to one and then another, frequently grow up with weak unstable affections.

The natural sequence of human relationship for the child is from the mother to the father, the brothers and sisters, the grandparents, the more distant members of the family, and the servants of the house; and after these come its own playfellows and the friends of its parents. Very young children are apt to cry, or, at any rate, put on a look of alarm, if taken amongst a large company of strangers, and this is simply because they cannot yet feel any connection between themselves and people outside their own family, and are, therefore, frightened by them. Everything strange and unknown, unless it be led up to by gradual transitions, gives a shock to the system. If the harmony of the soul is to be complete in the future, the child's feelings must not be overstrained at first, but the circle of his affections allowed to expand gradually.

Hence it must always have a pernicious effect to take young children out of the family circle, and set them in the midst of a larger community, where no natural bonds of affection can be knit.\* Children who have been placed at an early age in orphanages, or who have spent the first part of their lives in a foundling hospital, will generally be found to have a melancholy, listless expression of countenance; they always look as if something was wanting to them, however good the arrangements of these institutions may be. Nothing can fully

\* It is quite another thing to take young children (even during their two first years) for part of the day to Kindergartens, for they will there be thrown only with children, and will have companions of their own age.

take the place of the natural atmosphere of family-life which has been divinely ordained for children, though at the same time it is fair to acknowledge that orphan asylums do, to an immense extent, compensate the little ones received in them for the want of a mother's care and love.

"Father, mother, and child make up at first the whole human being," says Fröbel. The family is the first link in the organism of humanity, the first social community. And if this first link be imperfect, how can the others hang together properly?

If, on the other hand, this small circle, in which the starting point of morality may be said to lie, does not in course of time extend its horizon, exclusive family love would degenerate into family egotism, of which there is already quite enough in the world. In the Middle-Ages such exclusiveness was to a certain extent necessary; it had its justifications and its good results. But in the present day the conditions of life are different; and family egotism, such particularly as exists among the aristocracy and in the seclusion of country life, must be rooted out as a remnant of feudalism if the love of humanity is to increase and spread.

Hence children, when once they have become thoroughly at home in the family circle—have embraced all its members in their affections—must be introduced to a larger circle, which should consist chiefly of children of their own age. The face of the youngest child will brighten with delight when it meets another of the same size or age. An instinctive feeling of sympathy arises where there is a similar degree of development, just as in later life people of kindred minds become attached to one another. The Kindergarten affords the best possible playground for infants, even before their second year; but it is essential that they should be accompanied by their mothers or nurses.

The hand-games in the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" furnish also the first introduction to the family relationships.

Almost everything that comes under a child's notice will suggest to it these relationships, because they are the only ones known to it. Its dolls are made to represent father, mother, and children; it plays at being father or mother with its little

companions. A child of two years old or so will cry out : "Father and mother stars !" while gazing at two large shining orbs in the heavens (*see* "Mutter u. Koselieder"). These and a hundred other examples teach us what a prominent place this most natural of relations occupies in the minds of children.

In one of the finger-games the child's fingers are made to represent its parents, brothers, and sisters.

For instance :

This is the mother, dear and good ;  
 This is the father, of merry mood ;  
 This is the brother, strong and tall ;  
 This is the sister, beloved of all ;  
 This is the baby, still tender and small ;  
 And this the whole family we call.  
 Count them—one, two, three, four, five,  
 To be happy and good they always strive.

In another game the fingers are counted and doubled down one after the other into the palm of the hand, while at the same time the names of the brothers and sisters and of the child itself are enumerated :



To thumb now I say one ;  
 To index finger, two ;  
 To middle finger, three ;  
 To ring finger, four ;  
 At little finger five I number.  
 Now I've put them all to bed,  
 Pillowed is each sleepy head :  
 Let them rest in peaceful slumber.

A. G.

Counting is an inexhaustible source of amusement to little children, as, indeed, may be everything that is of importance for their development, if only it be presented to them in a suitable form ; and it is extremely easy to make the importance of number intelligible to them by degrees, either with the

measure of music, or the rhythm of verse, or by giving them a number of things to count. This little game also affords opportunity for exercising children's power of self-control. Nothing is more difficult to them than to stand perfectly still without making a sound or movement; it is in vain that they are bidden to be silent unless they are made to feel that there is a reason for silence. But here is a game of which they understand the meaning, and they will remain perfectly motionless, with an expression of the greatest importance, for whole minutes, and even a quarter of an hour, under the impression that they must not wake the sleeping little ones.

From young children only very little must be expected, and only a little at a time can be taken in by them. The smallest efforts increased by degrees will lead up at last to the greatest ones.

In another of the finger-games the fingers represent a flower-basket in which the child carries flowers to its father, and thus opportunity is afforded to the tiniest human being of expressing its love in action.

The motto to this is :

"Seek your children's hearts to hold,  
By all the means you can devise ;  
Even *their* love for you may grow cold,  
A plant that is not watered, dies."

Further on in the book we find two grandmothers visiting each other with their grandchildren : this is an expansion of family relations. The story connected with this game strings together all the various objects which have hitherto served the child as playthings in order to produce on its mind an impression of the continuity and connection of all things.

Fröbel says :

"Ein ganzes soll das Leben ihm werden,  
Dies ist schon des Kindes Bestimmung auf Erden."  
"The child should grow into a full harmonious whole,  
This is, while yet on earth, the destiny of his soul."

It is one of Fröbel's leading ideas, and one which recurs

again and again, to impress the unity and continuity of the universe and of humanity on the child's mind in all sorts of different ways.

If the modern mania for associations would extend itself to associations of families, for the combined purpose of improving education and of introducing greater community into it, more good would be done than by all the associations for material and industrial ends. The Kindergarten furnishes the best means for this purpose by placing the beginnings of education among a community of friendly families, each member of which has the opportunity of using his endowments for the greatest good of the young generation.

As in the case of adult individuals, of nations, and of humanity, there are great and critical periods of development which have a decisive influence on their careers or histories—so is it with the growth of children. It is such periods as these that Fröbel endeavours to point out and explain to mothers in order that they may turn them to their destined use. The greater the child's unconsciousness at the time, the stronger will be the effect on its moral development of all impressions it may receive. If these critical periods of growth were judiciously dealt with, not too roughly interfered with, while at the same time sufficiently watched and helped to make their work lasting, the whole development of the character would receive a different and a better bias. The most trifling incidents are of importance in childhood; for the whole future life is influenced by the impressions made then.

For instance, Fröbel looks upon the child's first fall as an important event in his early development, and one of which the full impression should not be disturbed. The child's confidence in running arises from his being still ignorant of danger—he is like virtue which has not yet been tried! He falls, and is for the first time frightened out of the repose of unconsciousness. The wise plan then would be to leave him to himself, not to lift him up at once and overwhelm him with pity and lamentations, even though he should have hurt himself a little and begun to cry. This first fright and pain will thus produce

their full impression on him, and foresight will be awakened in him; his self-confidence will no longer be a blind instinct, and the necessity of acquiring strength and skill will become gradually recognized.

Nothing makes people so superficial as being subject to constant rapid successions of impressions, the one effacing the other, and no lasting mark being left on the mind or character. The present generation, in the rich and fashionable world especially, affords ample proof of this. Rapid reading, rapid travelling, enjoyments of every kind (even the noble pleasures of art and nature) crowded one on the other, the hurry and bustle of modern life generally, tend more than anything else to produce superficiality, emptiness, and dulness.

So little thought has hitherto been given to the signification of children's earliest play, that we cannot too often remind our readers not to look for this meaning in the outward form of their games, but in the fact that the utterances of children, being the natural expression of their human nature, reveal this nature in its earliest beginnings. A considerable number of examples from the series in the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" is necessary to make Fröbel's theories quite intelligible, and we shall therefore insert here several other specimens, in order that the fundamental idea which guided him may be more thoroughly grasped.

One of the well-known games often played with little children, and which always causes them great enjoyment, is Bo-Peep. Now it is Fröbel's theory that whatever invariably calls forth expressions of delight from the little beings, and has become a tolerably universal practice, has always a deep significance for their development; and he explains the never-ending delight afforded by the game of Bo-Peep in this manner: that the child through the momentary separation from its mother (*viz.*, when she is hidden by the handkerchief) becomes more conscious of its dependence on her, and for this reason that nothing can be realized, or made objective to the mind, except by contrast with its opposite. But if the mother should neglect to evince her joy at seeing her child again after being hidden from him, or

should allow the child to remain hidden too long without looking for him and rejoicing at finding him again, a love of hiding for its own sake may gradually be acquired, and thus the first step taken towards the habit of concealment, from which falsehood and deceit are not far removed.

Who could pretend to decide exactly where the first imperceptible germs of evil in the human soul originate, and how they show themselves? The faintest gleam that promises to light up the darkness of early psychology is not to be despised by the educationalist, and Fröbel has certainly penetrated deeper than any one else into the earliest beginnings of the soul's life. Good and evil lie always close together, but Divine Providence can make good come even out of evil; and education should do its utmost to use the impulses which might lead to evil for the promotion of good. With regard to the danger of the game of Bo-Peep exciting in the child a love of concealment Fröbel says: "From the very point whence danger threatens to come, help may come also—as it always is in God's world—if only you, the mother, rightly understand how to turn to a right account every impulse of your child's nature. Through the outward separation, rightly used, the sense of inward union will be strengthened in the child. The great end everywhere to be kept in view is the attainment of unity, and every separation should be made to conduce to this end."

What is most essential for the later educational influence of the mother is that in the very earliest period of her child's development she should have succeeded in gaining its confidence, so that, when the moment of the first fault (or "fall") comes, the child should not think of hiding itself from her. But this confidence can only be won by the mother's living in the child's life, that is to say, playing with it, entering into everything that occupies its little mind; in short, understanding and rightly directing its earliest utterances. If the first fault has been committed, loving sympathy with the child's inward suffering, while at the same time he is made to feel that it is to a certain extent brought on by himself, will have more effect than any scolding or punishment. That these cannot be entirely dispensed with as the child grows older is of course understood;

but the natural consequences of a fault are always its most effectual punishment. The youngest child can tell at once whether praise or blame is intended in a look, and if the mother possess true educational tact she can do much in this way.

This occasion of the child's first fault is of the greatest importance, because it brings with it the first awakening of conscience.

In order that he may learn to listen to this inward voice, to catch by degrees its faintest whispers, and follow them obediently, the child must first have been accustomed to pay attention to a call addressed to himself. Fröbel associates the first attention to the mother's call with

#### 'THE CUCKOO GAME.

The child is hidden in its mother's arms or close to her, does not see her, but hears her call, and is delighted by the sound of her voice. If the child be constantly kept up to following obediently the voice of his mother directing him to what is good and right, he will also listen to the voice within him, and not let it speak in vain. If the mother has made her call dear to him by never requiring of him anything in opposition to his childish nature or to his particular character, then he will also love the call of conscience as the voice of God, and this voice will accompany him through life as a guardian angel and bind him to God. The same relation which exists between the child and mother after the former has learnt to distinguish his own will, and therewith his own personality from that of his mother, will exist later between his individual inclinations and the judicial or warning voice of universal reason speaking to him through conscience. If love, loving obedience, and trusting confidence prevail between mother and child instead of fear of severity and punishments, there will be a possibility in later life of that true virtue which follows the dictates of conscience, not from cowardice and fear of compulsion (inward or outward), but from free choice and out of love of right, and of God. Whether a human being become a moral *freedman* (within



the given limits) or a slave to his own and others' caprices, depends to a great extent on the foundation laid in the earliest days of his development. It is not how often or how seldom he fails, but how he lifts himself up from his falls and atones for the sins committed, that determines the moral worth of a man.

In our days, when obedience to personal authority is growing less and less, it is certainly of the utmost importance that education should do all in its power to encourage obedience to law. The child should be made to feel at an early age that his parents and teachers are, like himself, subject to a higher Power, in order that there may be early awakened in his mind the conception of a moral order, to whose authority he will in time have to submit. All the qualities of a child may, if not carefully watched, pass over into their opposites and degenerate into faults.

The first characteristic with which education has to contend is self-will. Without a certain amount of self-will the character would never develop itself; for it is precisely out of self-will, *i.e.*, one's own will, that the resolution, the assertion of one's own personality and opinion, in short, all that makes of human beings morally responsible men and women, is developed.

The child's self-will is the perverted expression of his growing feeling of personality. This feeling is roused when something contrary happens to it, or something that it wants is denied to it. Now if this *something* be a thing that he is justified in wanting, something that has to do with a necessity of his preservation or development, the child is in the right; but if he simply will not submit to some justifiable demand of his elders, then he is in the wrong, and must not be listened to. For instance, a child cries in its cradle for food, or from an instinct of cleanliness, or any other justifiable prompting of its nature, and is not attended to, and this neglect excites him to anger, and his screaming is set down to self-will. In such a case the mother or nurse is to blame. But if a child simply cries whenever it wants to be taken out of its cradle, it must not always be humoured; so that its will or determination may not degenerate into obstinacy or wilfulness. True, the child may be said

to be justified in requiring that which is agreeable to it, and wishing to get rid of what is disagreeable; as, for instance, lying alone and unoccupied in its cradle. But then some occupation should be provided for it in its cradle, and thus the reasonable part of its demand be satisfied.

It is most essential that children should learn from the very beginning to submit to the conditions of life, and even sometimes to do without what they are justified in wishing for, and to bear what is unpleasant to them for the sake of others; they must be trained from their cradles to subordinate the individual will to the community, and to sacrifice self out of love to others. But these exercises in self-denial must not at first extend to giving up anything really necessary to them, and must never last too long.

There is no more difficult task in education than to strike the right balance in this matter, on which the whole struggle of human life turns; avoidance of all that is disagreeable, of all pain and sorrow, and striving after well-being and happiness, are the two opposite forces by means of which Providence works out our whole development. Here, too, love, the highest principle of morality, is the only one that can lead in the right direction. Let children learn through love to give up their own will to others; this is the only right sort of obedience and that which arouses energy for good, whereas obedience from fear produces cowardice. The obedience of love begets reverence, the noble desire not to grieve parents or others who are beloved, and from it there will spring later a holy fear and reverence of God.

In training children to obey, very little distinction is made between right and wrong obedience. The child's will is too often cowed instead of being guided and directed towards right; and this is the reason why so few human beings attain that true moral independence without which the highest kind of freedom, that of the virtuous man who rules himself, is impossible, and the inner kernel of the character can never fully unfold itself.

Fröbel lays down the following general rules. To satisfy the child's demands as much as possible; to be wisely indulgent;

not to command and forbid unreasonably; and to allow the child, as far as it can do so without injury, to teach itself by its own experiences.

It would not be nearly so difficult to make children obedient if people began in earliest childhood, and set to work in the right way. Before egotistic inclinations, selfish impulses and passions have yet been aroused and become obstacles in the way, submission to law, which presents itself in the guise of parental authority, is not difficult to the child if only he has been inspired with a sense that nothing but his welfare and happiness are thought of.

This applies also to animals, who know at once whether harm or good is meant them. One glance at the human eye is enough to inspire the animal and the little child with confidence or distrust. It is only by patience and love that animals can be trained, not by commanding and forbidding; and yet this latter plan is the one chiefly adopted with young children, in spite of the proverb which says, "Das verbot nur reizt." These then are the chief things to be remembered: That love begets confidence; that only what is right and wholesome should be required of children; that all compulsion should be avoided from the beginning; that they should never be taxed beyond their strength, and that everything that is disagreeable to them should as far as possible be averted from them.

As they grow older, more and more may by degrees be exacted from them, and sometimes even that which for the moment is difficult and disagreeable, for love and trust will submit blindly and conquer the individual will.

And as it is only in childhood that a firm basis of true obedience can be laid, so is it with all virtues which depend chiefly on the formation of good habits and experience of their beneficial consequences. It is therefore of the greatest importance that this first period of childhood should be understood in its minutest details and treated accordingly.

Another critical moment in the development of children, and one which the "Mutter u. Koselieder" takes note of, is when they first begin to observe that people are talking about them

and criticizing them. Without the desire to gain the love and approval of others, the human being would be deprived of his strongest stimulus in his endeavours after the good and the beautiful. This desire kindles in the child as soon as he arrives at a distinct perception of his own personality. He then begins to wish to be loved and praised by others, and it depends on the right or wrong guidance of this instinct whether it will develop into proper love and reverence, or into vanity and ambition.

In the games "The Riders and the Good Child," and "The Riders and the Sulky Child," Fröbel endeavours to teach mothers the right way of dealing in this respect, by making the riders delighted with the good child, while they leave the sulky one behind. Children must be made to feel that they are loved for their good qualities, and not for their outward appearance. They are too apt to hear themselves praised as the "pretty child," the "beautiful child;" to have their clothes admired, &c. The attention of many mothers is exclusively taken up with their children's dress. "What will people say if you make your frock dirty, crumple your hat?" and so forth, is the ordinary talk of nurses. Thus the child grows up with the idea that people pay more attention to its outward person, and value it more for this than for its real merits. Outward appearance is, indeed, the standard of the many. Whatever the children see their parents value or despise, they will value or despise themselves.

If ever a time is to come when appearance shall no longer rule the world, or at any rate when reality shall have a humble place by its side, children must be supplied with a proper standard at the beginning of life. Pride, vanity and bragging, which beget folly and crimes of every kind, originate in the early perversion of noble impulses which were implanted by the Creator for the purpose of striving after good. And as succeeding generations inherit from each other sins and iniquities, so the virtues that have been cultivated in humanity, and whose germs lie in the first motions of the child's soul, may also be transmitted. The whole problem of the development of humanity consists in passing from semblance to reality.

The first step to moral development must thus be the cultivation of the senses. Whether these become ministering organs to the spirit or slaves to sensual enjoyments will to a great extent be decided in childhood.

As the sense of taste is the first which pronounces itself in the child, so his first desires are wont to be associated with eating. Most children are little epicures, and it would be unnatural if they were indifferent to this earliest pleasure which their senses afford them; but it is owing to bad bringing up that so many children are remarkable for greediness, daintiness, and excessive love of eating and drinking.

There is only one way of opposing a barrier against low desires, and that is by developing a capacity for higher enjoyments. We do not mean to say that coarse desires and passions can be entirely rooted out by following Fröbel's system, but that the physical organs will in this way be directed to the utmost towards spiritual things, and the higher part of human nature made to counteract the lower—the animal. The sooner this work is begun, the more completely will it be carried out. Hence Fröbel requires of mothers that they should rightly discipline their children's senses.

He recommends, for instance, that when children are at their meals little songs should be sung to them, or else that some animal, such as a dog or bird, should be at hand for them to feed, in order that the work of the palate may not engage their whole attention. He would also have children encouraged in the practice of giving part of their food to others instead of enjoying it all to themselves. But then what is offered by the child must really be taken if selfishness is to be counteracted, or he will soon find out that his sacrifices are only pretended ones. These distractions must not, however, be great enough to deprive the child of all enjoyment of its food, for that would have an injurious effect on the health.

This sense of taste must, moreover, to a certain extent be cultivated, for all the senses are given by the Creator for a distinct purpose, and require development, or cultivation, in order that they may fulfil this purpose.

The child acquires its first capacity for distinguishing, through

the sense of taste; it is in this way that it first becomes in a measure conscious of what is pleasant or unpleasant, beautiful or ugly. And here, as everywhere, we find an analogy between the world of the senses and that of the spirit. Fröbel points out how the word *taste* not only describes the functions of the palate but also the result of a cultivated sense of beauty, and thus connects the two facts together. The child exercises the power of comparison when it notices the differences in the taste of food, and if later he is to become possessed of *taste* in its sense of a feeling for the beautiful, he must learn also to distinguish between the more or less beautiful and harmonious, the suitable and the non-suitable; must be taught to shade and group together colours, to weigh and measure sizes and forms against one another, and so forth. Following out the idea that all and everything may be referred back to one fundamental principle, Fröbel traces taste in its æsthetic sense to the development in the child of the taste for food, and explains in this way the fact of their common appellation. It need scarcely be said that it is only the earliest germ of æsthetic culture that we are here alluding to, and that for the development of the complete fruit, training of the most diverse kind is needed.

One of the little songs in the "Mutter u. Koselieder" is called the "Schmeck-Liedchen" (Tasting-song), and directs the child's attention to the different tastes of different fruits—the sweetness of cherries as opposed to the acidness of currants and apples, &c.

Owing to the misunderstanding of much that Fröbel has written and said, it has been occasionally supposed that he assumed nothing but good qualities in every child. If this were the case, what need would there be for education? All the normal faculties and dispositions would unfold of themselves without disturbance. Any one who, like Fröbel, has spent his whole life in observing children from their very birth, cannot be blind to the great differences which are seen even in the youngest children—differences not only of individual endowment but of impulses and inclinations. Symptoms of the degeneration of naturally right instincts show themselves even at the earliest age. It is not only in the families of great

criminals that the heritage of evil is transmitted from fathers to children: the proverb "The apple does not fall far from the apple-tree,"\* will bear universal application.

Care must, however, be taken to distinguish between whatever in the original dispositions is broadly and universally human—according to the divine conception of humanity—and the individual characteristics of generations and individuals which appear in the course of the development of mankind, and whose purpose is never far to seek.

For the transformation of the savage or the natural man into a cultivated being, there must of necessity be a wrestling with inborn dispositions. Without obstacles which call forth exertion moral development is unthinkable. At present, however, very little is done to facilitate this struggle by exercising the moral forces in the first period of existence, as Fröbel recommends, by seeing to it that the play of children, while satisfying in a natural manner their childish requirements, also conduces to their moral well-being and acts as a pleasant stimulus to their whole nature. If happiness be secured to them through good means—through the right use of their powers—the utmost possible will have been done to prevent their seeking it in wrong ways. Unused powers are almost invariably the first cause of evil.

The physical nature should not be kept caged and chained down like a wild beast, but should be ennobled by worthy culture. Passions kept down by force and terror will only break forth with greater ferocity when free scope is allowed them, like a tiger escaping from its cage. Passion is force uncontrolled and not directed to its proper object; and this force ought not to be suppressed, but so ruled and disciplined as to be converted into energy for good. In the human organism nothing can be assumed to serve unconditionally and of necessity a bad or unlawful purpose. Where this is the case it is the result of some abuse, and to prevent such abuses as much as possible is the problem in question. The original intention of all the powers and dispositions implanted by the Creator can only be to bring about good in one way or another. But if it

\* "Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm."

is the destiny of the human being to attain to moral freedom, there must of necessity be room for him to err, for the choice between good and evil must be left to him. Were we so constituted that we must of necessity choose what is good, we should be no better than machines. Only free choice, and the experience of the consequences resulting from our choice, can raise us to the dignity of conscious existence, self-knowledge, and moral freedom.

Faith in the final triumph of good over evil under God's guiding providence in the world's development—this was Fröbel's philosophy, as it was that of Herder, as it was and still is the philosophy of thousands of other thinkers.

When the child has become thoroughly at home in his immediate surroundings, his notice will begin to be attracted by the industrial life going on around him—by the different pursuits of handicraftsmen. Many of the hand-games with which he will already have grown familiar, are based on the movements and turns of the hand customary in these occupations. The child who has seen the various processes of planing, sawing, threshing, grinding, &c., represented in his games, will observe them in real life much earlier and with far greater interest than other children who have never had their attention drawn to them.

The child ought to be initiated into the different functions of human life, and therefore, of course, into manual labour of different kinds. The imitation of the movements of the hand in different kinds of work may be said to be the child's own first work, and at any rate trains his principal instrument of work—viz., his hand. These gymnastics repeated, every day at fixed times, may also be treated as the first little duties of the child, and so form the introduction to later more serious duties, and the foundation of moral culture.

The imitative games given in the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" have for their object to draw the attention of children to the different qualities of things, and especially to the pursuits of human life.

In the game called "*The Joiner*," for instance (where the



movement of the hand represents the action of planing) the child's attention is drawn to the high and low sounds produced in planing, by the alternate long and short drawing out of the plane. The observation of this and similar facts will make it easier afterwards to understand the general fact that form and sound, and time and space, correspond to one another.

(A quick short movement produces high sharp tones; a movement slowly drawn out, low deep ones.)

A variety of examples of long and short, of great and little objects, of longer and shorter intervals of time and the different tones connected with them, will gradually prepare the child's mind for the easier apprehension of this idea.

The motto to this game is :

“That all things speak a language of their own,  
The child right soon discovers ;  
But little heed we what is quickly known :  
Lay this to heart, ye mothers.”

It is only by means of contrasts, or distinctly pronounced differences, that children can learn to know things individually, and distinguish or compare them. In the example cited above, the long and short sticks used by the joiner serve as illustrations of the law of contrasts, just as a similar illustration is afforded by the measure between long and high notes of music. But Fröbel does not leave these opposites or extremes isolated, and expect the child to fill up the space between : the long and short sticks are connected together by others of intermediate sizes, and the same with the high and low tones of music.

This universal principle, the constant application of which is the kernel of Fröbel's method, is thus brought before children in its simplest manifestation. If, in their earliest years, they have already gained some idea—albeit, a very limited one—of the law of opposites and their reconciliation through the observation of the different properties of things, the same law will be discovered by them later in moral qualities. As, for instance, the story of David and Goliath, in which the conquest of skill and mental culture over mere rude strength is described, being connected with the game of “The Joiner,” the contrast between mental and physical greatness is exhibited.

The hand-game called "The Carpenter" (in which the position of the hands represents a wooden house with a balcony) is used by Fröbel to teach mothers to make their children's home dear and sweet to them by the love and happiness which they find in it; whatever the child experiences in its parents' house, whether love and concord, or quarrelling and



disagreement, that will it bring to its own hearth. Here, in the home of childhood, will the foundation be laid either for love of home and domestic life, or of that craving for dissipation which seeks its satisfaction outside the home. But here, too, may that family egotism be developed which is a hindrance to the universal love of humanity. It is one of the most sacred duties of parents, to represent in miniature, through the divinely-ordained organization of the household and family life, a picture of the organization of the State and of society, into which the citizen should carry the lessons learnt in his home. The lowliest hut may be a temple of humanity if the different members of the family constitute a true human organism, standing in living relations to the community and the nation. Education of the right sort will elevate the instinctive love of kindred into the spiritual love of humanity—of humanity in God. But it is only the sacred fire on the altar of the home that can kindle this holy flame in the child's heart.

One of the greatest and most universal delights of children is to construct for themselves a habitation of some sort, either in the garden or indoors, where chairs have generally to serve their purpose. Instinct leads them, as it does all animals, to

procure shelter and protection for their persons, individual, outward self-existence and independence. When they have installed themselves in a corner with a few bits of furniture of any sort, they delight in fancying themselves alone in their own dominion. The instinct of habitation in animals which prompts the bird, on its return in the spring, to seek out its old nest, becomes, in the human being, the love of home, out of which sentiment springs the love of country.

Fröbel says: "The whole after-life of the human being, with all its deep significance, passes in dim shadowy presentiments through the child's soul. But the child himself does not understand the importance of these presentiments, these dim strivings and forebodings, and they are seldom noticed or attended to by the grown-up people who surround him. What a change there would be in all the conditions of life, of children, of young people, of humanity in general, if only these warning voices were listened for and encouraged in early childhood, and apprehended in youth in their highest meaning, and welcomed as guardian angels.

Were this the case human beings would certainly understand each other better, and, therefore, love each other more throughout life, and hundreds of the best and ablest people would not live and die misunderstood.

#### THE COAL DIGGERS.



Deep in the mine below the ground,  
The collier men and boys are found ;  
With strength and skill they work away,  
To bring the coal to the light of day.

They carry it up that others may burn it,  
And the smith at his forge to his use will turn it.  
For how should we get a knife, spoon, or fork,  
If these honest coal diggers weren't willing to work ?  
With much care and labour they dig the coal out,  
And their faces grow black as they turn it about.  
Come, child, let us give these good miners a greeting,  
For spoons and for forks which we use for our eating ;  
And though with their labour their faces are black,  
Their hearts no true goodness or kindness do lack.\*

A. G.

This song is specially intended to teach the value of manual labour, and therefore also the importance of the hand. Children should learn to honour this member, which is a distinctive mark of the human being, as a valuable gift of God, and to take care of and cultivate it accordingly ; and the mothers should inspire them with reverence for the roughest and dirtiest work as being necessary for human society. She should teach them to respect human beings of every condition, even the lowest ; if they are faithfully fulfilling their duties ; and not, as is so often done, represent chimney-sweeps, colliers, or any other labourers who become blackened by their work, as objects of terror and disgust.

It has been reserved to our age to ennoble work, and to show that it is not a disagreeable necessity but an essential condition of human life and dignity, and thus give the lie to the prejudice which for centuries has governed the world, viz., that work—at any rate rough, bread-winning work—is a disgrace ; and idleness, the true sign of nobility and the happy privilege of the upper classes.

But Education has a nobler work before her than even to counteract this prejudice—which, moreover, has already in part been overcome ; she has so to train the rising generation that they may be able to turn the mighty industrial impulse of the present day to a higher and worthier end than mere material gain and material happiness. With the increase of wealth, leisure, and intellectual capacity, there should be a widening of

\* The "Charcoal Burners" not being an English institution, I ventured to alter the song.—A. G.

the spiritual horizon and a growth of moral power. Precisely here, where lies the cause of so much of the immorality of our day, may be found also the most effectual lever for the upraising of mankind; and it cannot be set working too soon.

How are greater honesty and uprightness ever to be infused into trade and commerce if, from their very cradles, the children of the people not only hear worldly gain and prosperity held up as the highest attainable end of existence, but are even led on by their parents, either by example or by direct injunctions, to trickery and fraud of every sort? The idealism which has always been considered the special characteristic of Germany, and has been held to extend even to a fault, is not found there in over-abundance now-a-days in any class of society—so thoroughly has the mercantile spirit spread everywhere. Striving after the *real*, in the most material form, fills up the whole existence of the majority of people, and leaves no room for any higher aim.

Two of the hand-games which represent a *Markt-bude* (Market-booth) afford an example of how the child's attention may be directed at an early age to the negotiations of trade. It is a bad plan to encourage children to expect that whenever they are taken into a shop something will be bought for them; greed of possession is apt to be awakened in them in this manner. They should be allowed to look round at and admire all the various products of human art and industry, and, if anything does fall to their own share, it should be pointed out to them how many different pairs of hands, and what a variety of industrial machinery, must have been called into play for the production even of a single article; and how all human labours fit into each other and combine together to produce the requisites of material existence. Every object which calls forth their admiration may be made the occasion of representing the different labours of human beings for one another as so many signs of mutual love—which, at any rate, is the ideal side of commerce. And with this idea is associated the duty of preparing the child to take, one day, its own share in the common work of humanity.

One of the greatest educational problems of the day consists, undoubtedly, in finding out the right means of welding the

material life of every-day reality with the higher, spiritual aims which stretch out beyond the short span of human existence.

We are approaching an age in which physical and mental work will no longer go on side by side in complete separation, but will be for each individual more or less closely bound together. Manual labour requires, every day, more and more culture and insight of mind; science is daily entering into more intimate fellowship with technical and industrial works. Perfect health of body, mind, and spirit is only conceivable if all the powers and organs are set in activity, and a three-fold equal division of exertion is therefore necessary. The precise mode in which this reform is to be carried out matters little, the important thing is that the young generation be fully prepared to meet this and every other demand made by the regenerating ideas of the present and the future.

One of the most effectual means of calling the ideal side of human nature into play is early artistic culture; and now-a-days, when art and industry may be almost said to be as twin sisters, a certain amount of this culture is necessary for all classes. There are few trades, for instance, that do not require some knowledge of drawing. Music, too, is penetrating more and more into all classes. But in these, as in all other branches of human culture, the first grounding is still very deficient, and the immense amount of time consequently required in after years in order to arrive at even a small degree of proficiency, shuts out many, even among the gifted, from these arts.

In the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*," we find sign-posts pointing in this direction also.

#### THE FINGER PIANOFORTE

is the name of one of the little hand-exercises in which the fingers moving up and down represent the notes of the piano, and the accompanying voice gives the scale and exercises on the different intervals.

Motto: "Baby fain would catch the sound  
Of the lovely things around,

For the spirit oft can hear  
 Sounds uncaught by mortal ear.  
 Early teach thy darling this,  
 Wouldst thou give him joy and bliss."

A.G.

## SONG.

Now a carol gay,  
 We on our fingers play ;  
 As each finger down we press,  
 Hear the tone of loveliness.

1 2 3 4 5 5 4 3 2 1  
 \* La, la, la, la, la ; La, la, la, la, la

1 2 3 4  
 La, la, la, la ;

2 3 4 5 5 4 3 2  
 La, la, la, la ; La, la, la, la ;

4 3 2 1  
 La, la, la, la ;

5 3 2 1 2 3 2  
 Baby's hands are small and weak ;

4 2 1 2 3 4 3  
 'Tis so small it scarce can speak :

2 2 4 3 5 4 3  
 Yet it always loves to play,

2 3 4 2 1 3 2 1  
 Singing songs the live-long day.

A. G.

In addition to the simple songs which serve to awaken and cultivate the sense of hearing from the very beginning of life, Fröbel also recommends little glass harmonicas on which chords and simple melodies may be played to children. The chief thing always to bear in mind is, that all impressions should be gentle and gradual, and that no discordant noisy sounds should startle the sensitive young organs. For this reason, the harmonicas used by Fröbel are constructed in such a manner that they produce soft tones. The noisy jingling and clapping of keys and other articles with which children are wont to be amused in the nursery, does not certainly tend to the develop-

\* The numbers represent the notes and their intervals.

ment of a musical ear. The obnoxious articles known as children's rattles might also with advantage be replaced by some more melodious instrument.

Children are generally very fond themselves of trying the sounds of different objects, and it is therefore a good plan to produce melodious notes for them with all sorts of objects, and to draw their attention to the different qualities of sound which different materials produce. A number of exercises for the ear, on pieces of metal and other materials, have already been introduced into schools for little children with great success.

But here again the first music lessons should be learnt from Nature. In this great school the child should be encouraged to listen to the rustling of the wind and water, the twittering of the birds, the buzzing of the insects. In one of the illustrations in the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" may be seen in close proximity to a player seated at the pianoforte, a bird singing in a cage, corn swayed by the wind, a humming beetle, and a buzzing bee. One of the greatest singers of modern times (Jenny Lind) relates that her musical talent first showed itself, when she was only four years old, by her habit of sitting for hours at a time, as if chained to the ground, imitating all the sounds of Nature which she heard around her. In later years she could still reproduce them all, down to the buzzing of gnats and flies, with the greatest perfection. Humanity, in like manner, made its first musical studies in the school of Nature, and the first pipe constructed of reeds served also to imitate the sounds of Nature.

By the connection of counting with musical notes the child soon learns to perceive the analogy between number and sound, and the regularity and system of all movement forces itself on him, even if only as an indirect impression.

But though Fröbel would have children surrounded as much as possible by an atmosphere of music and harmony, it is very far from his ideas to make of them precocious virtuosos, or to give them a one-sided musical education, such as hundreds of children are now-a-days plagued with, to the detriment of the rest of their development.

Song must precede instrumental music, as coming more easily and naturally to the child. The learning of notes, which is



always a torment to children, can be got over without any trouble, and even in play, by the use of Fröbel's method. This consists in making the children mark down the notes as they sing them with counters of the colours of the rainbow (like the six balls of Gift I.), on a large ruled sheet.

The value of the notes will be very quickly learnt by means of the large cube divided into eight little ones. When a whole note has to be sung, the whole cube is left standing before the child; for two half-notes the cube is divided into two halves; and so on. There is no easier and more simple way of teaching children what is otherwise so difficult for them to acquire, viz., a conception of the value of notes. In the first games with balls, too, the chord of colour (two primary colours and one composite one) is connected with the musical chord, and there are other exercises of the same kind.

In order to develop the ear in a natural manner it is necessary, as, indeed, it is in all training, to begin in the simplest and most gradual way: the little exercises for the finger-pianoforte are a good example of the right mode of proceeding. The finger-practice connected with these, and the hand-gymnastics in the "Mutter u. Koselieder" generally, are by no means useless in facilitating the mechanical part of all instrumental playing. But they serve also to direct the child's attention early to the art of music, and to stimulate the will and the desire to learn it. The vocal exercises begun in the first years of the child's life should be continued without interruption, unless considerations of health make it impossible. All children, even musically ungifted ones, may have their voices and ears cultivated to a certain extent. It is often falsely assumed of people that they are entirely without musical capacity, whereas their deficiency in this respect arises really from the lack of any musical culture or stimulus in their childhood. Musical *geniuses* cannot certainly be produced by cultivation any more than geniuses of other kinds; but every soundly-constituted child can be trained to a certain degree of musical sensibility, and also to some degree of technical proficiency. And it is most important that all children should receive a greater or less amount of musical training, in order that in the absence of any other elevating

tastes, they may, at least, be capable of the enjoyment of the art which more than any other rouses the higher emotions of the soul.

### DRAWING

should be made one of the earliest occupations of children, for it is the art in which they may the most easily become themselves productive. There is scarcely a child who will not at a very early age begin to draw shapes in the sand with his fingers, or a piece of stick, or any instrument that comes in his way; or else he will sketch with his fingers the outlines of tables, chairs, &c. In this way he fixes objects more easily in his memory.

Fröbel's plan for assisting the child's instinctive efforts in this direction is to strew some sand on the table, or on a wooden board, and then to guide the little hand in drawing the outlines of things in the room; in this way the child's eye will accustom itself to compare the real objects with the outlines, and to regard the picture as a symbol of the object. The hieroglyphics used in the earliest ages of civilization to convey ideas were nothing more than outlines of things, from which by degrees letters were developed. And with children, too, pictures should precede letters, and drawing come before writing, that is to say, outline drawing. A child's eye can at first only discern the outlines of things, not the filling in and the details. In the drawings of the ancient Egyptians, too, we find nothing but outlines, and those generally straight ones; there is very little attempt at curved lines, which mark a higher development of the sense of beauty.

Fröbel's method of linear drawing, which forms one of the chief occupations in Kindergarten, exactly meets this want, and enormously facilitates the right apprehension of form, size, and number. Before the child is able to draw with a pencil, little sticks about the size of lucifer matches are given to it, and with these it is taught to lay out the principal lines of different objects. In this way its mind becomes stored with a variety of shapes and images, and not only is the foundation thus laid for later artistic culture, but, still more, Fröbel's first principle of education is carried out, viz., "to train children through the

encouragement of original activity to become themselves creative beings." His oft-repeated saying, "Let it be our aim that every thought should grow into a deed," can only be realized by humanity if indolence is as far as possible suppressed in the cradle. The fact has not hitherto been grasped that even in the cradle it is necessary to regulate activity; still less has it been thought possible to do this. Fröbel's "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" gives the clue to how it may be done, and it is for this reason that the book has an important bearing on the whole of his system, and that we have given it so much consideration.

Children should not be content with merely *taking in* and thus collecting in their minds a confused mass of forms and images which remain as useless as dead ballast. The impressions that are received within should be reproduced without. This, too, is what the child itself wishes to do, only it lacks the means and the power. Any one who watches children looking out of a window will see how eagerly their eyes follow the people and animals passing in the street; how they notice every little detail of the opposite houses, of the carriages and horses, of the dress of human beings. If a slate should chance to be at hand a few strokes drawn on it will serve to represent houses, animals, men and women, &c.; or vivacious children will try to imitate the movements they observe. The imitative instinct is the first spur to activity. But even suppose the child to be supplied with the necessary materials—which most children are not—he will still be unable to reproduce the objects as he would like because he cannot draw. He will soon grow tired of making meaningless lines and scratches, and will give himself up to staring vaguely out into the street; and his mind will soon become so inert that he will scarcely distinguish one thing from another.

This is one of a thousand examples of the little help and encouragement that is given to childish activity, and of the almost systematic manner in which natural quickness is stifled, and indolence allowed to grow into habit and inclination. Everlasting cramming, first through the eyes and ears, then through the understanding—learning, endless learning, is almost all that is thought of; *doing* is quite an unimportant matter!

Fröbel's plan, however, is quite the opposite one: he would have nothing seen or heard, nothing learnt, without being in some form or other given out again—reproduced—and thus made the individual property of the recipient. And he puts before us the means of cultivating this artistic activity both by early training in drawing and also in construction of all sorts. In his "*Menschen-Erziehung*" he says: "The capacity for drawing is as much inborn in a man as the power of speech, for word and symbol belong to each other as inseparably as light and shade, day and night, body and soul."

The balance between productiveness and receptivity is at present completely upset, and requires to be re-adjusted. This will be accomplished when Fröbel's method has become recognized, and children are taught in their earliest years by means of individual experience and production, and action is made the foundation and the constant companion of learning; when, in short, children are made to act according to the rules of morality before they can possibly know them; instead of, as is universally the case at present, knowing the rules without being able to act according to them.

With the help of the above examples we have now gone through the principal relations in which the child stands to human society, viz., his relations to the family and household, to industry, to trade, and to art.

By means of the exercises of which we have given examples the general powers of thought are called into play, and thus a foundation is laid for later study. By familiarizing children with the relations of words, number, shape, and size in their most elementary form, and by drawing their attention to the causes of the effects perceived by them in Nature, and their own surroundings (*see examples in "Mutter u. Koselieder"*), a way is opened up for the later study of science as could not possibly be otherwise done in the period of unconscious existence. Nature, that is to say, the whole visible world and the impressions it produces, is the basis of all science and all thought, the first awakener of the desire for knowledge. Impressions arouse observation, observation brings images before the mind

and induces comparison, and from comparison result conclusions and judgment. And let it be well remembered that it is in early childhood that the strongest impressions are produced on human beings.

Agriculture and the care of animals were considered under the head of relations to Nature.

And now will any one still ask, "What does all this matter to the young child; who understands nothing whatever about the relations of human life?" Will mothers still be of opinion that the meaning of nursery-rhymes and games is of little importance so long as children are amused by them?

Those who still think in this way have certainly not grasped the leading idea of Fröbel's educational theory, viz., that childhood, as embryo humanity, must express one and the same nature in all its stages of development, however great the difference in degree of development and in mode of expression. The child is the embryo man, *i.e.*, is destined to attain to conscious existence. Whatever human society has given birth to in the course of its development must have existed in embryo in its infancy—States and Churches, and all the institutions and organizations of civilized life. These all appeared at first in the crudest possible shapes—in fact in childish shapes; and childhood in its "unconscious actions" can do no more than express these beginnings of human existence, just as all young animals exhibit in their gambols the mode of life of their tribe.

Children, of course, do not and cannot understand the philosophy of the "Mutter u. Koselieder," but the games and rhymes produce on them impressions which rouse them to observation of their surroundings. Children will always be receiving impressions of some sort which will help to determine their development, and it is the business of education so to regulate these impressions that they may contribute to right and natural development.

If this theory of the necessary continuity between the life of childhood and that of manhood be not accepted, and the consequent logic of making the first instinctive utterances the starting-point of education, Fröbel's system must of course lose

all its signification, and his ideas seem very far-fetched and void of all connection with such little simple games as the "Mutter u. Koselieder" and many other books of the kind contain. Neither in such a case can there be any question of a plan of education proceeding continuously from the beginning of the child's life; for if the beginning of life does not correspond to the end—if Nature, speaking through the child's instinctive utterances, cannot be taken as a guide in this matter—we are left without any certain guide at all, or any starting-point.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE CHILD'S FIRST RELATIONS TO GOD.

FRÖBEL'S principle, that whatever is evolved in the course of the development of any human being is inherent in the human race and has its root in inborn dispositions, is also applicable with regard to man's relations to the highest Being. The belief in God, in the Divine, is also inborn, intuitive, and can be developed in every child. As all spiritual development, all consciousness, has to be evolved from dim undefined feelings and sensations, so is it with the consciousness of God. But also, as no faculty whatever can be developed without stimulus from outside and without appropriate means, so with respect to belief in God there must come both to humanity and to childhood some communication, some revelation from without, which shall convert the unconscious yearnings into conscious apprehension, supply a channel for the feelings, and give a definite form to the vague intuitive faith.

But how can God reveal Himself to the young child? Is this possible in the first years of life? It may truly be said that "childish unconsciousness is rest in God," it is inseparableness from God. But that which is inseparable from ourselves cannot become objective to us, for we cannot place opposite and outside us what is part of us. The child cannot take cognizance of himself—is not as yet a personality; he is one with all that surrounds him and that he is related to. Hence Fröbel says, "The child is at unity with Nature, with mankind, and with God." He lives still, as it were, in Paradise, as in the age before discord had entered the world, before there was division between man's outward and inward nature. He cannot be expected to have anything like religion, for the essence of

religion is striving after union with God, and we do not strive after that which we already possess. But at the moment when the child first sins against what is good, that is, against God, the unconscious union ceases, and division or discord begins.

With nothing and nobody in the visible world is the child so closely united as with its mother, and therefore Fröbel gives as motto to one of the little games in the "Mutter u. Koselieder" (the one called *Kinder ohne Harm*), of which the accompanying illustration represents a mother praying by the side of her sleeping children:

"Glaube dass durch gutes was du denkst,  
Du zum guten früh deine Kind schon lenkst ;  
Dass was sich in deinem Herzen regt,  
Auch des Kindes Seele mitbewegt.  
Und nichts Bess'res kannst du ihm verleih'n,  
Als im Minklang mit der Allheit sein.

"Believe that by the good that's in thy mind  
Thy child to good will early be inclined ;  
By every noble thought with which thy heart is fired,  
Thy child's young soul will surely be inspired.  
And canst thou any better gift bestow,  
Than union with the Eternal one to know ?"

The mother's moods communicate themselves instinctively to the child : for instance, she is frightened by something, and the child, without knowing the cause of her alarm, at once takes fright also. This immediate *rapport* and connection between them shows itself in the most different ways, and is at any rate not more wonderful than the influence which the mother's moral dispositions and affections exercise on her infant even before its birth. In like manner may the mother's piety affect the character of her child both before and after its birth.

"The most delicate, the most difficult, and the most important part of the training of children," says Fröbel, "consists in the development of their inner and higher life of feeling and of soul, from which springs all that is highest and holiest in the life of men and of mankind ; in short, the religious life, the life that is at one with God in feeling, in thought, and in action. When and where does this life begin ? It is as with



the seeds in spring: they remain long hidden under the earth before they become outwardly visible. It is as with the stars of heaven, which astronomers tell us have shone for ages in space ere their light has fallen on our eyes.

We know not, then, when and where this religious development, this process of reunion with God, first begins in the child. If we are over-hasty with our care and attention the result will be the same as with the seedling which is exposed too early and directly to the sun's heat, or to the moisture of rain. If, on the other hand, we are behindhand, the consequences will be equally fatal.

What then must education do? It must proceed as gently and gradually as possible, and in this respect, as with all other kinds of development, work first only through general influences. As the child's physical condition is healthily or injuriously affected by the badness or goodness of the air which it breathes, so will the religious atmosphere by which it is surrounded determine its religious development.

Example does not work only like so many facts or actions inciting to imitation: quite young children cannot understand these facts; as such, they have no relation to them and no meaning for them, and in most cases they are not able to imitate them. But the character of their surroundings will act, as it were, magnetically upon them, the influence of moods and affections will pass directly into their souls.

How, then, at this tender age can religious feelings be cultivated? Music will always find its way to the human spirit, and will produce impressions even on quite little children. Children, savages, and, indeed, all uncultivated human beings, are much more easily moved to cheerfulness by lively music, and to earnestness by serious music, than are more reasonable and thinking people, who do not give themselves up to every passing impression. Divine service without music would be very cold and barren. Almost every one must occasionally have experienced the power of fine church music, or of the simplest chorale on an organ, to rouse him out of even the most irreligious mood, or to stir in him a spirit of devotion. And in the same way influences

may be brought to bear on young children which shall at any rate correspond to their dim innate sensations, which are the precursors of religious devotion. Fröbel recommends mothers to sing choral melodies to their children on their going to sleep and on their awakening. To sing children to sleep is already a universal custom, but there should be a more frequent use of sacred music, whether in singing or in playing on an instrument, such as the harmonica, which Fröbel recommends.



Next to the influence of music comes that of gesture and expression, the earliest of all languages, and, therefore, that which appeals most readily to children. Gesture is the direct expression of the soul's mood; animals, savages, and children, who are incapable alike of dissimulation and of self-control, invariably make use of this language. Fröbel would have the gesture which is expressive of inward collectedness, viz., the folding of the hands, applied to children when going off to sleep—as soon, that is to say, as their little hands are capable of the action. Prayer is the highest expression of the inner gathering up of all the powers of the soul, and demands the deepest concentration of spirit, and the outward symbol or gesture of folding together the hands, which are now no longer to be occupied with external things, is in true correspondence with the inner meaning. And here again Fröbel's theory of the analogy between physical and spiritual activity is borne out.

At first the mother should pray at her children's bedside as they go to sleep, and as soon as they themselves can speak they should repeat the prayers after her. But if this exercise is not to degenerate into a mere parrot-like repetition without understanding, the child must be able to concentrate its spirit, and the words of the prayers must be in close relation to the child's experiences and feelings. The mother should be able to

draw out these feelings. She should recapitulate to him, for instance, when he is lying in his little bed, and all around is quiet and peaceful, the pleasures and the blessings which he has enjoyed during the day, and excite in him a feeling of gratitude towards all those who have contributed to his happiness, and finally lead his mind up in thankfulness to the great Giver from whom all good things come. In such a mood as this, the simple words, "Dear Father in heaven, I thank thee!" will be a real prayer.

If the child has been guilty of any naughtiness during the day the recapitulation of all the little events of the day will help him to detect how he came to commit the fault, whatever it may have been. The sorrow expressed by his parents at his naughtiness will make him unhappy, and when the mother says: "You have grieved us, your parents, very much, but you have grieved your Heavenly Father much more; you must pray to Him for forgiveness, and ask Him to help you to be a better child," the childish petition for forgiveness will be a true prayer, a real motion of the spirit. Fröbel relates of one of his pupils, a boy of five years old, that as one evening he (Fröbel) was saying his prayers with him, the boy asked him to repeat another prayer, in which were the words, "when I am naughty, forgive me, &c.," and that when he came to this passage, the child's voice trembled, and became scarcely intelligible, thus showing plainly that he was conscious of some naughtiness committed during the day.

If only more pains were taken in education to cultivate the right and sensitive feelings of children, or at any rate not to put out of tune the pure tone of their conscience, how great might be the gain to morality!

There is scarcely any way in which greater harm may be done than by allowing the holy name of God to be desecrated on children's lips through meaningless babbling, as in the mechanical repetition of prayers learnt by rote, which is part of the order of the day for children. It is hoped that children will be made pious in this way, but the very opposite result is produced, for it becomes a habit with them to approach their Maker through outward forms only, without that inner uplifting of the

soul, that outpouring of the heart before God, which alone constitute true and effectual prayer.

Modern charitable institutions, those especially in which the religious element is made the principal one, fail most lamentably in this respect. All reasonable people are fully aware that Bible history, the book of Genesis, the Ten Commandments, the Catechism, and all dogmas whatsoever, are entirely beyond the comprehension of children between the ages of two and six. Nevertheless, in the majority of such institutions all these subjects are taught to young children, and though it is true that an attempt is made to treat them in a childlike manner, it would be better if it were realized that in no form whatever can they be made intelligible to young children.

The idea which—most often unconsciously—lies at the root of this practice is that the relations of the human race to God, and to the highest things, should be presented to the child in historical sequence (that of a monotheistic philosophy, moreover, be it noted) from the creation of man to his redemption by Christian truth. That in this way the child will become acquainted with the continuity of human development in the past and the present. And all this must be done *because the development of children corresponds to the development of the human race.*

Now this is the very idea, as has over and over again been pointed out, which forms the pivot of Fröbel's whole system; but he has discovered a system by means of which the child is prepared for future understanding of religion, and by which his own religious feelings are awakened. And this is all that is possible in early childhood! Instead of presenting children, in the old-fashioned way, with a completely formulated system of truth, Fröbel aims at awakening and cultivating their organs, so that with the help of fitly corresponding impressions from without, religious belief and aspirations may grow and develop in their souls; in no other way can religion ever become a real possession, a distinct and living conviction.

I once heard Fröbel say: "If the Creator of the world were to say to me, 'Come here, and I will show to you the mysteries of the universe: you shall learn from me how everything hangs together and works;' and, on the other hand, a grain of sand

were to say, 'I will show you how I came into existence,' I should ask of the Creator to let me rather go to the grain of sand, and learn the process of development from my own observation."

In these words Fröbel's deepest conviction is expressed, that it is only by his own individual activity and exertions, rising gradually from the least to the greatest, that man himself can be developed.

It is high time verily that religion should come to be looked upon as the inalienable property of each human being, as, indeed, beseems the full-grown and conscious soul, if the irreligiousness of our day is not to increase and spread. And whence springs this want of religion but from the fact that the majority of human beings bring with them out of their childhood nothing more than a religion learnt by rote, which, owing to the want of understanding of its dogmas, kills instead of giving life.

One example from a pauper institution out of hundreds that might be given will here suffice to show that children do not understand the religious instruction that is imparted to them.

It was the evening of Christmas Day, and the festival was being celebrated, as usual, with a Christmas-tree. The children were all assembled together, and a considerable number of parents and of patrons of the institution were also present. After the customary singing out of hymn-books, little adapted to the children's capacity, stories of the birth of Jesus Christ, of the adoration of the magi, of Christian doctrine, of the sacrificial death of Christ, &c., were related to the children, and printed questions were asked them to which they gave answers learnt by heart. Then a little girl of five years old was mounted on a chair to represent the mistress, and a learned disputation, got up by heart, was carried on between her and the other children, in which the doctrine of redemption through the death of Christ, the proofs of the divine truth of the Bible, the sinfulness of human nature, &c., &c., were discussed. At the end of the proceedings I asked a child of four years old, Whose birthday we were celebrating? and received at once the answer, "I don't know." I then asked the same question of a

child of six, who answered doubtfully, "My birthday, mother's birthday," and seemed trying to guess whose birthday it could be. To a variety of questions relating to the subjects which they had just been hearing and talking about, which I asked of the elder children, the answer, "I don't know," was almost always given with great inquiring eyes; or else something so utterly wide of the mark that it was easy to see they understood nothing at all of what had been said. During the whole proceedings the children were either half asleep, or else restless and inattentive, and taken up with admiration of the Christmas tree and its load of pretty things. We shall have a word or two to say later, as to the manner in which Fröbel would have this festival turned to account for children.

It stands to reason that we do not intend to find fault with such of the hymns, narratives, and prayers used in these institutions as are adapted to the stage of development of the children. To all such Fröbel has given a place in his Kindergartens.

Nor is it our intention to criticize this or that tone of religious thought which may give its colour to education, but simply to draw attention to the unnatural mode of proceeding as contrasted with Fröbel's thoroughly natural system.

The most striking proof that he has hit upon the right plan lies in the fact that all sensible mothers who have either thought for themselves or been gifted with a strong and true educational instinct have long acted on a similar one. Were it not that such mothers form a very decided minority, Fröbel's instructions might be considered superfluous. But no more than in the political world one would think of assuming that a few good sovereigns and reigns made laws and constitutions unnecessary, can a few rational and gifted mothers do away with the necessity for principles and methods of education. Wherever unerring management or administration, and universal application is in question, the thinking, conscious mind must draw up a code of rules; a right code for education can only be arrived at by deducing from the nature and character of children a systematic plan capable of application in all directions.

No psychologist has yet made the child's soul the subject of

such profound research as has Fröbel, nor so closely drawn the parallel between the childhood of the individual and that of humanity; it is due to him, therefore, that even the smallest details should not be cast aside as useless rubbish until their inner meaning and principles have been sufficiently tested.

In considering the first relations of the child to Nature we pointed out how the impressions and the observation of Nature should lead him up to the Creator. In the chapter headed "The Child's Utterances," we glanced at the analogy which exists between the religious awakening of the child and that of infant humanity. By all the impressions that come to him through Nature, whether pleasing or terrifying, delightful or awe-inspiring, the undeveloped human being is unmistakably pointed to a Higher Power on which his existence depends. The language of Nature responds to that inner yearning of the soul which compels man to search for the Author of his own being and of everything that he perceives around him. This acknowledgment (at first only a vague foreboding) of God as the Creator, or the revelation of God in the visible world, must not only precede the recognition of God in the historical development of humanity, it must also be experienced by the child. Children have no point of comparison whereby to connect the narrative of the history of creation with the knowledge of the Creator. Neither are the unaided impressions which they receive for themselves from the free life of Nature sufficient. The only way in which they can be led to know God as Creator is through their own occupations in Nature, through the cultivation of the soil, on a miniature scale—in short, through personal activity and experiences, as humanity in the beginning of its existence found out God.

The following example taken from a Kindergarten will help to illustrate our meaning. Two little girls of four and five years old shared between them a flower-bed in the Kindergarten, and in this bed they, like the rest of the children, had sown a few peas and beans. Day by day they would grub up the earth with their little hands in order to see why the seeds did not come up. With disconsolate faces they used to look at their

little neighbours' beds, where tiny green seedlings were seen peeping above the ground. It was explained to them that if they wished for the same result in their beds they must leave off raking up the earth and wait patiently for the seeds to germinate. And now on their daily visits to their gardens the children might be seen exercising patience and self-control, while refraining from grubbing the earth up. At last one morning they were found kneeling down by their flower-beds and gazing with wonder and delight at a few little green blades.

This process of the vegetable world had already gone on frequently under their eyes, but hitherto unnoticed by them, because they themselves had not taken the personal part in it of sowing and watching. It cannot be often enough repeated that in early childhood nothing will make a lasting impression in which the child itself does not, in some way or other, take an active part, in which its hands are not more or less brought into play. And it is chiefly for this reason that Fröbel's hand-gymnastics are of such importance. Children always require practical demonstration, material proof, to enable them to apprehend abstract truth. The truth does not thereby cease to be abstract and spiritual; scientific truths proved by physical experiments must still be apprehended by the mind, although through the medium of the eyes. The more truths of every kind are presented to children in a corporeal or symbolic form, so much the greater will their power of spiritual or abstract apprehension be in after years, for they will have vivid images in their minds, and not merely a stock of statements learnt by heart. Again and again we must repeat that in early childhood all instruction which is conveyed solely in words is as good as thrown away. The human mind in the first stage of its development must have concrete demonstration; ideas must be presented to it in visible images.

The universal mind of humanity developed itself in like manner. Before understanding and learning could extend to details and thus become exact science, it was necessary that the influences of the surrounding world should awaken general conceptions, which reproduced themselves outwardly in broad-featured pictures and forms, and in the whole mode of exist-



ence; as, for instance, in the allegorical world of gods and demi-gods, in the mythology of the Greeks and Romans. Not till the mind of humanity had matured itself could it grasp the pure abstract idea of the universal, of God in the soul and in truth.

The two children at their flower-bed found themselves face to face with a wonder of Nature; only yesterday there was nothing visible, and to-day numbers of little green leaves were sprouting above the ground. The following dialogue ensued: "You see, now that you have waited patiently, the seeds have come up; or was it you who made them grow?" The children exclaim "No!" "Who, then, has done it?" "The good God." "Yes, the good God made the sun shine so that the earth became warm, and warmed the seeds; and then He sent dew and rain to soften the earth, and the soft, damp earth softened the hard seeds so that the little germs could push their way out—as you saw had happened to several of those that you took up out of the ground. The good God has done this to give you pleasure, as He does in so many other ways. Will you not try to give Him pleasure, too? How can you do it?" The children answered, "If we are very good," and the youngest one exclaimed, in a tone of the deepest conviction, "I will do something to please God!"

Later in the day, when the children were employed in plaiting strips of coloured paper, and one after another mentioned the names of the people for whom their works of art were intended, this little one replied to my question, "For whom was hers destined?" "I am going to give mine to God!" However trifling this incident may seem it was an entirely spontaneous expression of child-nature, and serves to show how easily the higher emotions may be awakened in children by means of material facts. For the development of religion the teaching of visible phenomena must come before that of words; the Creator must first reveal Himself in His visible works before He can be apprehended as the invisible God of our spirits.

The majority of children, especially in pauper institutions, are never encouraged to observe Nature, indeed, scarcely ever have a chance of receiving impressions from Nature; would it

not contribute far more to their religious development to take them out into the fields and lanes, or even only into a garden, and show them the Creator in His works, than to weary them with histories of the creation, of the fall of man, and all such narratives and instruction as it is customary to present to children, even in some of their games ?

The preceding remarks apply to the earliest years of childhood. A little later on it is desirable to teach children so much of the Bible history as is suited to their capacity; and this is done in Kindergartens.

But until they can form for themselves some conception of what history is, viz., a continuous series of events in human life (both of individuals and nations), until then nothing more must be communicated to them from the history of mankind than broad simple facts which are in direct affinity with their powers of observation. As with their affections so with their understanding, they can only start from themselves; everything outside them must be associated with their own experiences; their own little past history with the events that mark it is the only standard they can go by. But this must be made objective for them—they must see it represented in pictures, and we must make clear to them their relations to events and objects.

This it is that Fröbel aims at in his "*Mutter u. Koselieder*," which he intended to be the first *Story and History Book* for children—i.e., the history of their own short *past*. The illustrations contain scenes which occur in the life of almost every child—or, at any rate, will occur if Fröbel's system be followed. As, for instance, a child catches sight of a weather-cock; it is put into its bath; it feeds the chickens; picks flowers; looks at a bird's-nest; watches different handicrafts; plays the hand-games with its brothers and sisters, or little friends; sings little songs or draws pictures in the sand; its mother prays by its bedside; takes it out shopping with her, &c., &c.

The history of a child's own little life is easily fastened on to these and such like pictorial representations. "That's a picture of you," one may say to him: "there you are going

with your mother to see a bird's-nest, or a poor woman, or the coalman in the wood;" and so forth. The most marked features of the child's life, which, according to Fröbel's idea, should be fixed in the mother's mind, must be woven into the pictures. The frequent repetition of these little events, in which all the members of the family, all the people and things known to the child, find their place, and in which constant reference is made to God's fatherly love and care, will give the child, by degrees, a picture, on a scale suited to his powers of apprehension, of the little bit of life that lies behind him.

"Let a clear picture of their past lives," says Fröbel, "be given to children, let them learn to see themselves mirrored in it, and when they are grown up the light which illumines the way behind them will help them to see clearly the road that lies before them; childhood will be seen to be a connected part of all the rest of life, and a distinct conception of the childhood of humanity and of its connection with the rest of history will be possible."

In this manner there will be a real progression from the near to the distant. The child's mind will easily pass on from its own little history and that of its family and surroundings to the history of its nation, which must first be presented to it in its broadest facts, embodied in single marked personalities. Not until the mind has been led out of the present, first into its own past and then into that of its race and people, will it be in any measure prepared to be introduced to the history of the childhood of humanity as presented to us in the Old Testament. Children can quite well wait till they are eight or nine years old to begin this study.

What other idea is there at the bottom of this more or less traditional custom of making sacred history the principal subject of instruction in childhood, than that of connecting the facts of Divine revelation first with the history of the human race and then with that of one nation—the Israelites? But even on the supposition that there is anything in the child's soul to which these universal ideas and truths, gradually laid hold of by the human race, correspond, the events of a distant past,

which, however much affinity they may have with the child's nature, because themselves the outcomes of a childish age, appear, nevertheless, in unfamiliar form and garb—these events, I say, cannot be made in the least intelligible to children until their mental capacities are so far developed as to enable them to compare unfamiliar facts with those that are familiar to them in their surroundings. The fact is, that without giving the matter any thought, people assume an inner conscious life in the young child which is impossible at this early period of existence. But this inner life must, little by little, be called forth, in order that in it the child may find the point of contact between himself and the history of his race, in which the Divine revelation is pre-eminently embodied. This revelation must have appealed to the soul of the child itself before the most important point of contact with the universe can be felt.

The moment of such an inner revelation is like a flash of lightning, a holy shower of emotions, which cannot be called up at will, and which is generally hidden from every eye. An influence of Nature, a great joy, or the first anguish of the soul, a look, a word, a mere nothing, will often recall it, and it disappears again like lightning; but the impression has been made, the Divine revelation has taken shape in the child's soul. For example, a child of three years old who was being ill-used by its nurse wanted to complain to its mother, but the latter being absent the child exclaimed: "Father in heaven, tell her!" This was, perhaps, its first cry for help to God. The injustice of man drives the human soul to seek a higher refuge.

All that education can do in this respect is to furnish opportunities and means of preparation for this sacred moment, and to see that its impression be not effaced. For this purpose Fröbel's educational system, the beginnings of which are contained in the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*," is specially adapted; there is scarcely a single song in the book which does not, indirectly, at any rate, point to God as the all-loving and all-protecting father. The child's physical, mental, and spiritual natures are all fused in one, and must, therefore, be nourished with food suited to this threefold nature.

The "Mutter u. Koselieder," for instance, makes use of the game *Brod oder Kuchen backen* "Baking bread or cakes," in the following sense. When the child goes through the action of baking he is told that the baker cannot bake the bread unless the miller has ground the flour; that the miller cannot grind the flour unless the farmer brings him corn, and that the farmer will not have any corn unless God makes it grow, &c. Every little incident can be used to refer all things to God as their first cause.

Yes, every occupation which fixes the child's attention forms part of the general preparation for that closest kind of attention which we call concentration, and without which religious devotion is impossible. And because the attention of young children cannot be kept fixed for any length of time unless their hands are also employed, every one of the hand-employments in Fröbel's system helps at the same time to cultivate the power of concentration.

And all work, too, all exercises which awaken the active powers which form the capacity for rendering loving services to fellow-creatures, will help to lay the groundwork of religion in the child. The awakening of love goes before that of faith: he who does not love cannot believe, for it is love that discovers to us the object or the being worthy of our faith. Loving self-surrender to what is higher than ourselves—to the Highest of all—is the beginning of faith. But love must show itself in deeds, and this will be impossible unless there be a capacity for doing. A child can no more be educated to a life of religion and faith without the exercise of personal activity than heroic deeds can be accomplished with words only.

The religious difficulties of our day will never find their solution till Christianity has been made a religion of action as well as of profession, and to effect this we need a generation trained for Christian action.

If we consider what in point of fact is done during the first six years of life to promote religious development we are obliged to confess, either nothing, or else, we may almost say, worse than nothing.

Now this period of the first six or seven years is regarded not only by Fröbel, but also by many other educationalists before and after him, as the one in which the germs of all knowledge and action, *i.e.*, of the whole of civilized human life, are set. Art and science cannot be practised before the requisite organs have been called into play. So long as the child is incapable of any higher sensations than those which relate to his immediate wants, of any degree of inner concentration, or of the slightest effort to lift himself out of and beyond what most closely surrounds him, so long there can be no question for him of religious practice, of devotion and self-surrender to the Highest. That for which the child has yet no organs of reception does not even exist as far as he is concerned. And while this is the case, of what use would it be to him to know every syllable of Holy Writ and all the commandments of the world? We might as well at once adopt the method of a certain sect of Christian fanatics, who place Scriptural pictures before the cradles of children only a few months old, and read out to them the corresponding passages from the Bible, with the idea that the infants will thus be early initiated into the truths of Christian revelation.

The only grain of truth at the bottom of all these customs is just what Fröbel has fastened upon and turned to a right instead of a mistaken use: *viz.*, that the sensitiveness of young children to impressions from their surroundings should be made use of to assist in their development.

We have already seen what are Fröbel's ideas with regard to the religious training of children, what importance he attaches to the use of simple sacred music, and to the mother's example of reverence and devotion; how he would have the prayerful spirit awakened by the symbolic gesture of folding the hands, and prayer itself taught as soon as speech begins, to which the singing of hymns should soon follow; and, added to all this, how much he relies on the hallowing influence of impressions from Nature combined with suitable illustrations from the lips of the mother or other guardians.

Is not this enough during the first five or six years of a child's life?

Some people, no doubt, will think this too much, but to such we can only say that whatever nourishment the child's own nature, physical, mental, or spiritual, requires, it must be good for it to have, and it cannot have too soon: and any one who rightly understands observing children will not fail to discover amongst their other wants a necessity for the knowledge of God, and this necessity, being the highest of which the human soul is capable, should before all things be satisfied.

On the other hand, there are those who will require some more direct and positive allusion to Christianity and Church worship and doctrines. Now, although all people in any degree acquainted with the nature of children must allow that during the first six or eight years there can be no question of any real apprehension of doctrinal religion, that whilst the development of the organs is still going on, nothing more can be done than to awaken religious feeling and implant purely elementary and general conceptions, at the same time the youngest children cannot fail to be influenced by the doctrinal tendency of their surroundings; and here the matter should be allowed to rest during the first six years at any rate, for the soil must first be prepared before the seed can germinate. The Kindergarten system dispenses with all doctrinal teaching and confessions of faith, and if we look at God's method of dealing in the education of mankind, do we not see that there was a gradual preparation of the world for the reception of Christianity?

At the same time, we would not be understood to say that all direct allusion to Church matters and (in Christian families) to Christianity, should be entirely excluded during these first few years. Frobel's "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" is intended to embrace the germinal points of all human culture, and Church worship and doctrine cannot, therefore, be altogether ignored in the book; but in this, as in many other cases, the allusions are so slight that to outward observers they are almost imperceptible, and are only truly intelligible to those who see clearly the connection between the little and the great, between the physical and the spiritual in the human soul, as clearly and distinctly as Fröbel saw through the mind and spirit of the child.

The example in the "Mutter u. Koselieder" which first directs the child's attention to Church worship is called"—

### THE CHURCH DOOR AND WINDOW.



**Motto :** Where harmony in unison is shown,  
Alike in form and tone made known,  
The infant mind doth readily embrace it,  
And in its deepest mysteries doth trace it.  
To guide thy darling's earliest perception,  
Of this high unison to form conception ;  
And thus of joy to catch the brightest gleams,  
So hard a task will not be as it seems.  
Yet, for thyself, in all thy works take care,  
That every act the highest meaning bear ;  
Thus shalt thou lead it to that haven blest,  
Wherein its infant heart shall be at rest ;  
And nought can e'er deprive it of the benison,  
Of being ever with itself in unison.  
If this belief thou to thy child impart,  
It aye will thank thee with a joyful heart ;  
Think not 'tis yet too young this truth to prize,  
Within its little heart a magnet lies,  
Which draws it on to union's highest joys,  
And shows how severance sweetest bliss destroys.  
Wouldst thou unite thy child for aye with thee,  
Then let it with the Highest One thy union see.

A. G.

### SONG.

Behold this window of clear glass,  
Through which the blessed light doth pass,  
And see the high-arched door below,  
Through which into the church we go.  
But those who fain would enter there,  
Must come with reverence and care,



For all that deeply moves the heart,  
Within these sacred walls has part ;  
Here all our high desires are stilled,  
Our deepest longings are fulfilled ;  
We hear of God, so good and true,  
And of the blessed Christ-child too ;  
And those dim yearnings are made plain,  
Which oft with wonder fill your brain ;  
When you behold the heavens wide,  
Or in your parents' love confide.  
And you, my child, shall go one day  
To hear the deep-toned organ play :  
Lo, lo, la ; la, lu, lu, la !  
While of bells the joyful peal  
Doth unceasing joys reveal !  
Ding, dong, bell,  
Ding, dong, bell.  
Through our ears it moves our hearts,  
Oh what gladness it imparts !  
La, lu, la ; La, lu, la, la ; La, lu, lo.

A. G.

The mother, with her two or three-year-old infant on her lap, sits at the window on Sunday morning, points to the church which the people are flocking into, and makes the child represent with his hands the shape of the church window. She then sings to him the above chorale, at the end of which the pealing of bells is imitated.

The following example will show that something like a devotional mood may really be produced, even in so young a child, through the influence of sacred music, and of its mother's frame of mind.

In Fröbel's room one day there were assembled a number of children between the ages of one and a half and four years, all busily occupied with the Kindergarten gifts. A visitor who chanced to come in ventured to question Fröbel's assertion, that a feeling of reverence could be called up in even the youngest of these children. In order to prove his statement, Fröbel called on some of his older pupils to sing the chorale given above, and it was curious to see how one after another the children put down their playthings and listened to the music with wide open eyes, and an expression of almost holy

reverence on their little countenances. Now it is certain that no result of the kind is ever produced by the kind of religious instruction which is so common in institutions, and even in families, and which, with the best desire to produce piety, only tends to make sacred things wearisome to children.

As is signified in the motto annexed to the "Church Window," Fröbel sees the first direct expression of the child's religious instinct in its eager desire for fellowship. In the chapter on "The Child's Utterances" it was pointed out that the irresistible impulse of children to hasten to any spot where they see a number of people collected together in earnest consultation, or where a crowd is assembled for a common object, is only part of the strong necessity of their nature to be in sympathetic union with those around them. It is, so to say, a surrender of their being to something outside their own personality, to a universal power which is beginning to make itself daily felt in their souls. And what else is true religion but a complete surrender of self to the Highest Being?

It is, however, necessary that the Being to whom one thus surrenders one's self should be loved. Before a child can love the invisible God he must love visible human beings. For the child, as once for humanity, God must become man; and this must first be through the child's parents. The first condition of all religion is that we should come out of the narrow circle of egotistic self-love; and therefore love for its parents, as the first representatives of God, is for the child the beginning of love for God:

In all primitive religions sacrificial offerings play a principal part, and it is because the offerings signify the giving up of self, of the personality. If the child is made to feel the consequences of such surrender in the piety of its parents and others, in their manifest union with God, the unconscious union of his own inner life with the Highest will gradually develop into a greater or less degree of consciousness. His own dormant religious faculties will awaken if he sees similar faculties actively expressed by those around him.

Children thus brought up in a truly religious atmosphere, accustomed to refer every duty fulfilled towards man, every

service of love, every trifling action of daily life, to God as the highest power, who requires of us good in every shape, such children will when they are grown up make their lives a continuous active expression of Christian love, and not merely carry Christianity about on their lips—as is too often the case at present.

¶ First, then, God must become more or less objective to the child through Nature, and then He must be personified for him in man.

Just as mankind needed the personification of the Divine in a complete and perfect man whom it might follow as its pattern and ideal, so the child needs a personal example. But a full-grown perfect being, such as Christianity recognizes in Jesus Christ as man, cannot serve as a pattern for children. They must have placed before them an ideal suited to their stage of development—a Divine Child. Hence Fröbel would have hung up in Kindergartens and in nurseries pictures of the child Jesus on his mother's lap, in the Temple, &c. All the good qualities of children he would have associated in their minds with the Holy Child, and whenever they do wrong he would have them reminded that when Jesus was a child he was always obedient, thankful, loving, and so forth.

In this way, by means of the facts and events of their own lives, inward and outward, associated always with Jesus as a child, children will acquire a perfect living ideal of childhood by which they will become accustomed to measure themselves, and with the aid of suitable Bible narratives they will be gradually and naturally initiated into the central truth of Christianity—of God made manifest in man—without having their understandings bewildered with dogmas, which can only be grasped by the mature mind. Ideas of which the child can form to itself no conception are worse than useless to him, for they hinder the clearness of his mental vision and thus act injuriously on his development.

Pictures and facts appeal to the childish imagination, and Fröbel would have the religious instruction of children based also on this principle. For this purpose he revived the old

custom of exhibiting to children on Christmas evening a pictorial representation of the birth of Christ. Middendorf used often to tell how impressive this festival was wont to be at Keilhau, when at the end of the long room, filled with brightly-lighted Christmas-trees, and presents of all sorts for the children, a transparency would all at once appear, representing the birth of the Divine Child surrounded by green pine branches; how Christmas hymns—most of them written by Fröbel himself—were then sung; and how Fröbel used himself to fetch the poor women of the village with their youngest children, so that these too might, as he used to put it, have a “distinct impression” of the meaning of Christmas. To the older children it was explained, in simple language that this festival was to remind people of the birth of Jesus Christ, who had redeemed them from sin and error and brought back great happiness to the world.

It all depends upon the manner in which religious impressions are conveyed to children whether they will have a sacred influence on them in the present, and be a blessed recollection in the future.

The profound truths of the Gospel are far beyond the comprehension of children, but for this very reason the preparation of their minds to receive them later cannot begin too soon. All truths which take shape in the world are the blossoms of plants whose seeds were sown thousands of years ago, and have gone on germinating for centuries before they could spring up in the mind of humanity and bear flowers and fruit. And the same process which has gone on in the life of humanity goes on in that of the individual, beginning in infancy. All ideas and conceptions, and, therefore, also all religious conceptions, have their origin in the first impressions made on the senses, in the first childish imaginations, the first observations and comparisons of objects in the outer world. All the faculties of the soul must be cultivated up to a certain point if the human spirit is to become capable of union with the Divine Spirit.

Our hopes for a new and living conception of Christianity rest on our children. If we can only preserve to them the fresh-

ness and simplicity of their early innocence, their hearts will remain open to the pure and childlike spirit which breathes in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, and Bible truths will no longer be to them as petrified fossils of a bygone age. If they have grown up in loving fellowship and community, which is the true church for children, they will be able to carry out the deepest meaning of the Gospels, viz., the brotherhood of men, and the conception of Divine humanity and human divinity will become a reality to them.

The right form of a church service for children has yet to be discovered, but the Kindergarten meanwhile offers all the necessary elements for the purpose. The churches of grown-up people are certainly not the places for children. If momentary feelings of devotion are produced in their minds by the general stillness, the music, the number of people collected together, these cannot last, and are quickly followed by distraction and weariness, for the service is too long for the children's powers of attention and beyond their understanding.

And this does not only apply to children before the age of ten; even at a later age their powers of religious apprehension are not on a level with those of grown people. A boy of eleven years old, on being once asked what was the subject of a sermon he had just heard, answered, "The reconciliation of Christ," because the preacher had frequently alluded to the work of reconciliation. When the boy was further asked the meaning of this word, he could not answer at all.

So it is in the majority of cases: children's minds are crammed full of expressions with which they connect no meaning.

We give as a last example from the "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" the hand-game called

#### THE FOOT-BRIDGE.

Motto: "Let thy child in play discover  
How to bridge a chasm over.  
Teach it that human skill and strength  
Will always find some means at length  
Things most widely severed to connect—  
Union, where it seemed most hopeless, to effect."

SONG.

Along the meadow flows a brook,  
A child stands by it with longing look ;  
He sees bright flowers on the other side,  
But can't get to them—the stream's so wide.  
"On your back, take me over," he cries, to a duck,  
"Those lovely flowers I want to pluck !"  
Then up came a man with a wooden plank,  
He laid it across from bank to bank ;  
Safely along it the little boy ran,  
Crying—"Thank you, oh thank you, you kind clever man !"



If by such and similar examples children have been made to understand the meaning of connecting together, or reconciling, things that are separated ; if, according to Fröbel's system, they have been constantly occupied in their own little labours in *connecting* (or reconciling) opposites, the application of the word "reconciliation" to visibly separated objects will have become quite familiar to them, and it will not be difficult to explain to them later the meaning of the Christian doctrine ; especially as they will also have become familiar, through a variety of examples and applications, with the analogies between the visible physical world and the spiritual one.

That such teaching by analogy or parables is necessary for the comprehension of spiritual truths is shown by the frequent use of it in the Gospel itself. But to many of our readers this comparison between the connecting together of physically separated things and the union or reconciliation of individual imperfect men with God through the perfect and Divine man, will seem as far-fetched as the analogies in other cases that we have quoted. It is, however, the fate, not only of new theories,

but also of new embodiments of old theories, to produce the impression of exaggeration and eccentricity, and so it must be with Fröbel's theory of the analogy between the outer and the inner world and between physical and spiritual impressions, until by frequent repetition and practical application it has become familiar to the world.

Any one who observes the present methods of bringing up children, and considers what it is that the latter really want, must be of opinion that there is need for greater attention to the beginnings of moral deflection and the early cultivation of religious feeling.

Children can no more become religious by their own unaided powers than they can become anything else that is desirable for them. The fact that early religious teaching has hitherto been conducted in a mistaken and senseless manner does not prove that it cannot be done in a right and profitable way. This, however is beyond all question, that unless education, and especially early education, be established on a right religious basis, the next generation will be the most godless that has ever lived on earth, more dissatisfied and melancholy even than the present one, and just as little able to solve the great problems of the day.

Veritable progress for mankind as a whole is unthinkable if religion be left out of account. The extension of material knowledge, the widening of man's relations to nature and to humanity in social and communal respects necessitates a corresponding expansion in our relation to God and all that is highest. It is still not sufficiently understood, that while on the one hand religion and Christian truth must in their essential character remain always the same, our apprehension of them must continually increase and expand until we come to realize their connection with every department of life. Whoever will not agree to this must also consider the Reformation as unjustifiable.

Not until men have gained for themselves the recognition of an all-pervading omnipresent God, a firm central point round which their whole being will revolve, in which laws, politics, science, art, and all social endeavours will culminate, not till then shall we see a regenerated society which, cemented to-

gether in love, will realize the true conception of humanity, or convert into a living reality the Christianity which is now cramped and disfigured and deadened by church system. It is grievous to see how much outward forms and dogmas still take the place of true religion of the heart. It is not, however, by rationalism and irreligiousness that the degenerate Christianity of modern times can be conquered, but by a new generation which, itself filled full with the true spirit of the Divine Teacher, shall let this regenerating power stream forth through society.

The religious conflict of the present day has its meaning and its use, and will bring forth fruit in the future; but it must be kept as much as possible removed from our children. If they are to be capable in time to come of restoring harmony to a world of discord, of re-adjusting balances and getting rid of contradictions, their young spirits must be left undisturbed to strengthen and develop, and must learn to soar up in love and enthusiasm to the Infinite, and find their rest only in the Highest. Short of this there can be no real religion, however much the intellect may learn to speculate concerning spiritual things. True religion is the continuous action of a whole life—a striving after God in all and everything.

It is the high office of mothers to consecrate their children to this life-service, and Fröbel offers them his "*Mutter u. Koselieder*" as a guide to this sacred task.



### CONCLUSION.

THE leading ideas of Fröbel's educational system may be summed up in the following statements:—

1. The task of education is to assist natural development towards its destined end. As the child's development begins with its first breath, so must its education also.

2. As the beginning gives a bias to the whole after development, so the early beginnings of education are of most importance.

3. The spiritual and physical development do not go on separately in childhood, but the two are closely bound up with one another.

4. There is at first no perceptible development except in the physical organs, which are the instruments of the spirit. The earliest development of the soul proceeds simultaneously with, and by means of that of the physical organs.

5. Early education must, therefore, deal directly with the physical development, and influence the spiritual development through the exercise of the senses.

6. The right mode of procedure in the exercise of these organs (which are the sole medium of early education) is indicated by Nature in the utterances of the child's instincts, and through these alone can a natural basis of education be found.

7. The instincts of the child, as a being destined to become reasonable, express not only physical but also spiritual wants. Education has to satisfy both.

8. The development of the limbs by means of movement is the first that takes place, and, therefore, claims our first attention.

9. The natural form for the first exercise of the child's organs is *play*. Hence games which exercise the limbs constitute the beginning of education, and the earliest spiritual cultivation must also be connected with these games.

10. Physical impressions are at the beginning of life the only possible medium for awakening the child's soul. These impressions should therefore be regulated as systematically as is the care of the body, and not be left to chance.

11. Fröbel's games are intended so to regulate the natural and instinctive activity of the limbs and senses that the purpose contemplated by Nature may be attained.

12. Through the gradual awakening of the child's will this instinctive activity becomes more and more *conscious* action, which, in a further stage of development, grows into *productive* action or *work*.

13. In order that the hand—which is the most important limb as regards all active work—should be called into play and developed from the very first, Fröbel's games are made to consist chiefly in hand-exercises, with which are associated the most elementary facts and observations from Nature and human life.

14. Inasmuch as in the human organism, as well as in all other organisms, all later development is the result of the very earliest, all that is greatest and highest springs out of the smallest and lowest beginnings, education must endeavour to emulate this unbroken continuity of natural development. Fröbel supplies the means for bringing about this result in a simple system of gymnastic games for the exercise of the limbs and senses; these contain the germs of all later instruction and thought, for physical and sensual perceptions are the points of departure of all knowledge whatever.

15. As the earliest awakening of the mind has hitherto been left to chance, and the first instinctive activity of childhood has remained uncomprehended and unconsidered, there has of course been no question of education at the very beginning of life. It was Fröbel who first discovered a true and natural basis for infant education, and in his "Mutter u. Koselieder" he shows how this education is to be carried on, and made the foundation for all later development.

It is, therefore, essential that the principles and methods laid down by Fröbel should be attended to at the very beginning of education, if full benefit is to be derived from the Kindergarten.

The training of mothers, and all who have the management of young children, in the application of Fröbel's first principles of education, is consequently the starting-point for the complete carrying out of his system, and consequently, too, of immense importance.

The little, seemingly insignificant, games and songs devised for the amusement of infants are easy enough for girls of the lowest degree of culture to master. The true development of women in all classes will best be accomplished through training them for the educational calling, seeing that Nature has pre-eminently endowed them for this work. Simple receipts for the management of health (and, above all, the practical application of them in the care of children) are also within the grasp of women of all degrees of culture. By placing such instruction within the reach of women of all classes the first step will be taken towards the full and perfect training of the female sex, of all who have the care of children, of all future mothers in all ranks of society, for their educational vocation.

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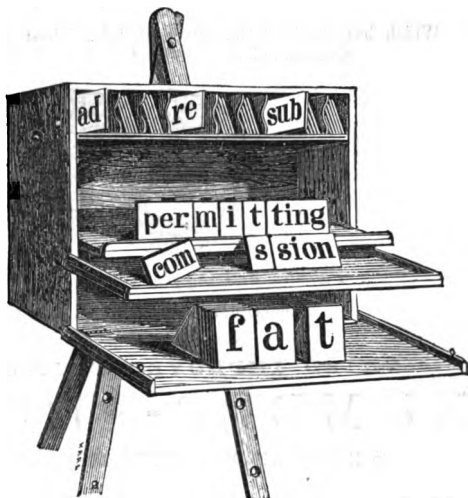
I. Upon the higher or back part of this stage place a row of blocks, with the least-sloping side forwards, to support the letters forming words. The wooden blocks are to be used for the larger series of letters, the metal ones for the smaller.

II. It is best for each letter, as far as possible, to have one block, for itself, to rest against, so as to give way when a second letter is placed over it, and so that in forming a series of words such as *bat, cat, fat, hat, pat, rat, sat, vat*, the letters forming the word may at all times be on the same level, the block being pushed back so as to make room for the letters *b, c, f, h, p, r, s, v*, to rest in front of it, without thereby disturbing the level surface of the word.

III. It is best to begin by spreading out the consonants, in alphabetical order, in a line along the top of the box and along the front border of the lower stage. If the smaller letters are used, there will be room for two such sets, one for the initial letters and the other for the final letters of the words to be formed. In the case of the large letters there will not be room for two sets of consonants, and therefore a little management may be needed to enable the teacher always to put his hand upon the letter required in changing first the initial letter and going through such a series as *bat, cat, fat, &c.*, and then changing the final letter and forming such a series as *cab, can, cat, &c.*

IV. The vowels may in either case be spread out on the lower front part of this shelf.

V. It will be advantageous for the teacher to keep the consonants thus arranged in alphabetical order throughout the lesson. After going through the series *bat, cat, fat, &c.*, he will naturally have the letters *b, c, f, h, p, r, s, v*, all in one heap resting in front of one block. He will then go backwards through the series *vat, sat, rat, &c.*, by taking off the letters *v, s, r, &c.*, in succession. If he puts each of these letters back into its place in the alphabetical row, *v*, as he takes it off to show *sat, s*, as he takes it off to show *rat*, and so on throughout, he will have all his letters ready to start on a fresh series.



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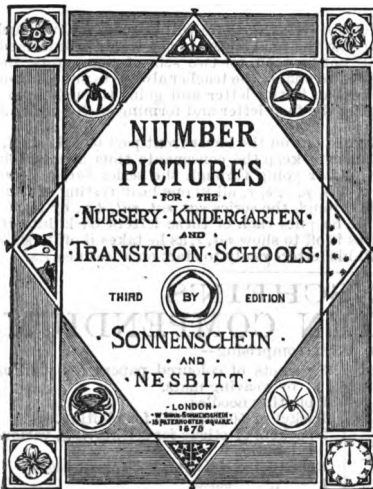
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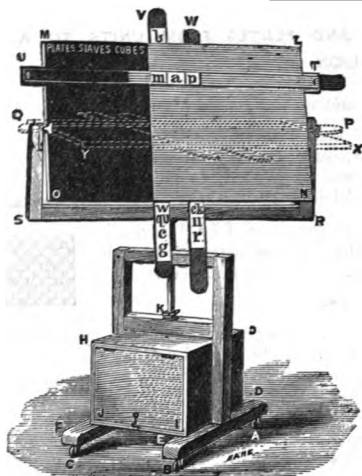
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3. As a reading machine; and
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## DESCRIPTION.

By means of the ball-and-socket joints at *q* and *r*, and of the two screws at the sides, either face of the board can be fixed at any desired inclination, from the horizontal of a common table to the vertical position of a common black-board. By means of the rectangular revolving frame, *q s r*, the board can be placed in any desired direction; and by means of the iron rod and pin at *x*, it can be fixed at any desired elevation. The box below the board serves for the reception of chalk, duster, &c.

*As a Common Table.*—At a suitable elevation and horizontal position the Black-board can be used as a table to teach from, and by inclining the surface somewhat towards the class, the teacher can exhibit objects, diagrams, and drawings, more conveniently than from the level surface of a table, or the upright surface of a common Black-board.

*In teaching Drawing or Geometry* he can trace the diagram or design on the horizontal, or slightly inclined, surface of the board, which being placed between himself and his class, obviates the necessity of his turning his back on his class, an inconvenience which frequently leads to some loss of discipline or of influence.

If the diagram or design is too complicated to be drawn invertedly, the teacher may still draw it as usual towards himself, and then, by means of the revolving frame, turn the whole board round, thus bringing the figure into the right position towards the class, so as to be able to discuss it with them. All this is done without losing sight of the class.

*To teach Geography.*—The first Geography lesson should always be a plan of the school-room. If the Black-board be moved into the middle of the room, and have, by means of the revolving frame, its four edges placed parallel to the four walls of the room, the plan is easily followed and understood even by very young pupils.

When the class is advanced enough to understand a ground-plan or a map of the neighbourhood, the teacher can fix the map or plan on the board, placed at a level surface in such a way that the northern edge of the map be directed towards the true North, and be parallel with the upper edge of the Black-board; then elevating the board, by means of the iron rod and pin, and giving it the vertical position of the common Black-board, the map fixed on it will appear with North at the top; but by this time the class will have understood that this is a mere matter of convenience and agreement, but that the true North is a certain horizontal direction.

*The Reading Machine.*—Through the whole length of the Black-board three holes are cut, two vertically and one horizontally, for the reception of three slides, on which are printed certain letters. On the horizontal slide are printed the vowels, and on the vertical slides the consonants; the slide beginning with the letter *b* is for initial consonants, and that beginning with *t* for terminal consonants. On that face of the board, which is painted partly blue and partly black, will be seen two covering slides; if these are partially withdrawn, they expose at pleasure one, two, or three apertures. The middle aperture is for the vowels, and the other two for the initial and terminal consonants. Disclosing only the left-hand and middle apertures, and placing the vowel *o* in the latter, we can, by shifting the initial consonantal slide, form the words, *go, no, so (do and to can also be formed, but these being exceptional are better postponed).* Next placing *e* in the middle aperture, we can form, *be, he, me, we, she, the.* Placing *y* in the middle aperture, we form, *by, my, thy, shy.* Exposing only the right-hand and middle apertures, and placing *a* in the vowel hole, we can form, *am, an, as, at, ash;* with *i* in the middle aperture, *if, in, is, it;* with *o* in the middle aperture, *of, on, or, ox;* with *u* in the middle aperture, *up, us.* These are all the 30 words in the English language written with two letters, *th* and *sh* being regarded as single letters.

Next opening all three apertures, we can form hundreds of, in fact all, the words in the English language written with three letters, as:

<i>bat</i>	<i>bet</i>	<i>bit</i>		<i>but</i>
<i>bad</i>	<i>bed</i>	<i>bid</i>		<i>bud</i>
<i>hat</i>		<i>hit</i>	<i>hot</i>	<i>hut</i>
<i>had</i>			<i>hod</i>	
<i>lad</i>	<i>led</i>	<i>lid</i>		

&c., &c. See "The English Method of Teaching to Read" (in 4 little vols.), by A. Sonnenschein and Professor Meiklejohn, M.A.

When by this means the functions of the letters are learnt, the rest is a mere matter of information. Of course more holes could be cut through the board, but experience has shown that this is not required.

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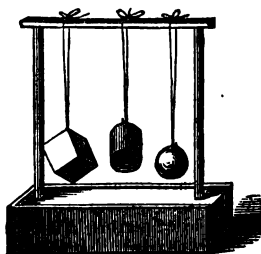


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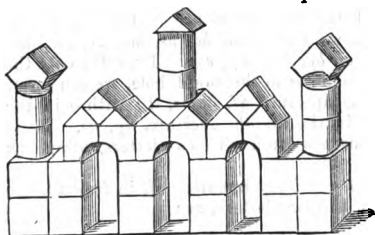
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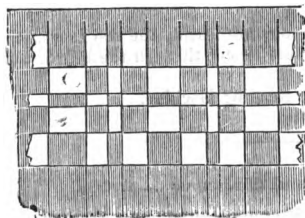
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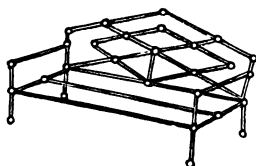
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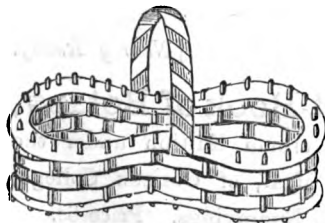
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